OLD PLACES REVISITED;

OR,

The Antiquarian Enthusiast.

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Thus shall Memory often, in dreams sublime,
Catch a glimpse of the days that are over;
Thus, sighing, look through the waves of Time
For the long faded glories they cover.

MOORE.

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VISIONS OF THE TIMES OF OLD;

OR,

The Antiquarian Enthusiast.

PART VII.

THE HOUR AND THE MAN; OR, THE MYSTERIOUS SUMMONS.

MESS. Gracious my lord,
I shall report that which I say I saw,
Yet know not how to do it.

MACB. Well, say, sir.

Macbeth, Act v. sc. 5.

FLO. Your preface awakes my curiosity,—to the story, I beseech you.

The Perplexities, Act ii. sc. 2.

ANT. Sure thou dream'st, Ventidius.

All for Love, Act i. sc. 1.

MOP. Is it true, think you?

Winter's Tale, Act iv. sc. 3.

LEON. No, no; we will hold it as a dream, till it appear itself.

Much Ado about Nothing, Act i. sc. 2.

A soul in its ideal race transported
Was mine langsyne. Ye busy phantoms, shout,
And span the universe of thought; about
Fling dreams in multitudes. He who hath courted
Rich visions once will court them still: their stir
Is breath and life to beauty's worshipper.

Anon.



CHAPTER I.

THE REVERIE.

OTX. My soul hath her content so absolute,
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.

Othello, Act ii. sc. 1.

SIR ERNEST OLDWORTHY had now perused every syllable of these rare and curious evidences; and his mind glowed with a thousand exciting dreams that built themselves, in cloudy majesty, over the newly-discovered tract thus rescued from the ocean of time's forgetfulness. Much did he felicitate himself on the splendid stores of learned disquisition with which he should enrich his next colloquy with his neighbour and familiar, Dr. Simon Degge, who participated almost equally with himself in an anxious desire to penetrate the dim vapours of oblivious obscurity, that slumbered over the fairy-land of early history. But, as the greatest triumphs must draw to an end, as well as the least; or as, in olden phrase, "Barnabie's day itself hath a night;" so did the ex-

cited spirits of our Antiquary gradually abate of their vivacity; and, in proportion to their previous activity, seemed the pervading listlessness that slowly encroached upon his faculties. Closing the venerable packet, and depositing it in the secret drawer of his antique chair, he sought a neighbouring sofa, and sank gently back on its eider-down pillows and cushions of cramoisy damask; devoting his thoughts to the renewed but more placid contemplation of the various contents of the lately-perused volumes.

The storm yet raged without, but the warm wood-fire burned steadily within. Every object around was peculiarly expressive of quiet and repose. The social companion of his more solitary hours, his gentle and seemingly-meditative feline favourite, rubbed, with privileged freedom, her sleek and delicate coat against the permissive form of her indulgent master; thrumming and purring in serene token of gratified kindness. Nor did the soft lisping murmur that was addressed to his ear by that genial remembrancer of certain post-prandial observances, the small refulgent silver kettle, which cheerily reflected the glow of the neighbouring pine-logs, pass unregarded; so sensitive had become his feelings to the balmy placitude of the hour—to the soothing and grateful influences that opposed themselves to the external strife of the elements. Nay, he rather delighted to catch the fitful sough of the wind through the yew-trees; and felt, as

he closed his languid eyes, the full force of the sentiment of the Latin poet:—

> "Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem,
> * * * * *
> Aut, gelidas hibernus aquas cum fuderit Auster,
> Securum somnos, imbre juvante, sequi."

It was a true septentrionalian blast that howled around the Antiquary's dwelling; and, by its humid accompaniment only, referrible to the "Auster" of the Roman elegist. It might well have brought to his mind the Runic treasures of Icelandic eld—the hoary chronicles of the saga-man and the skald, blended with the clattering of war-boards, and the ringing of the bright brands of Hillda. It might have spoken to him of the "ancient Runæ of Fimbultyr (1);" of the "devices of Valfödur (2);" and of the "early discourses of men:"—

> "I know the giants; the early born;
> They who formerly instructed me.
> I know there are nine worlds, and nine supports,
> And the great centre under the earth."

But Sir Ernest thought not of the "beautiful son of Hlodynia (3)," nor of the "offspring of dread Fiorgunar (4);" the worthy knight of Repingdon was quietly settling into a deep and delicious forgetfulness of the modern, as well as of the ancient cosmography, and of his own microcosm to boot. The serene vapours of Morphean obscurity spread their shadowy Eden around his spirit; and, under their

bland and mild influence, he ceased to hear the sound of the "mystic horn of Heimdallur (5)," (as the storm-wind might have appeared to his wakeful ear), or the wildly-agitated whisper of the ancient and solemn trees that replied to it.

And now, courteous reader, be informed that what followeth is marked by so wide a departure from the trodden paths of every-day fact—by so strangely remote an erration into the wilds of the wonderful, that, rather than provoke an impeachment of the sober veracity with which we shall continue to unfold the particulars of the narrative, we will take this early opportunity of placing the receiver of the story in the same position as ourselves; frankly apprising him that, although we agree with the general truth of the assertion of the princely Dane, that—

> "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy,"

yet we are, at the same time, sceptical enough to doubt whether the evidences of modern science will admit of so wide an application of its *thesis*, as was implied under the aforesaid royal aphorism; and also whether the sympathies of this prosaic and coldly-reasoning age will not recoil from the visionary features of so marvellous a scene of adventure as that which we are about to narrate; when even our own excitable and less sober faculties are inclined, albeit with reluctance, to repel the extraordinary attempt to

illude them. Should the worthy reader, therefore, exclaim with *Horatio*:—

> "O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!"

we can only reply, in the answering words of *Hamlet*:—

> "And therefore, as a stranger, give it welcome."

CHAPTER II.

A LATE AND STRANGE VISITOR.

LORD. I speak amazedly; and it becomes
My *marvel* and my *message*.
Winter's Tale, Act v. sc. i.

THE deep shadows of night—likened, in the boldness of romantic metaphor, to the dusky folds of the dragon's wing—now spread themselves over the wintry waste surrounding the Antiquary's abode; and his little household had retired to their early and quiet slumbers. The half-impeded tones of the village clock, struggling with the capricious violence of the tempest-breeze, died away unheeded in the dreary solitude; while, to a poetical imagination, the sweeping and whirling storm-gusts that broke the prevailing silence, might have seemed to proceed from a troop of ancient giants, seeking to unbend their hoary fierceness in some playful revel, and filling the sombre halls of darkness with their antic mirth.

Sir Ernest Oldworthy, according to his own apprehension, had indulged but for a few minutes in the embrace of sleep, when he was suddenly aroused into

broad wakefulness, by a sharp and vigorous sequence of knocks at the hall-door, betokening the arrival of some unusual and apparently-impatient visitor. It was a singular fact, as furnished by his own subsequent observation, that his mind was involuntarily impressed, as he awoke, with the strange and remote idea, that the occasion of the salutation which interrupted his slumbers, was identified in some mysterious way with his late-indulged anxiety to wrest from the prison-vaults of Time the fettered events of the Mercian dynasties, involving the secret history of the kingly war-chief—the nursling dream of his ever-fruitful imagination! So forcibly did this singular notion present itself, that, as he hastily obeyed the summons, advancing, through the dimly-lighted and armour-freighted hall, towards the yet unseen visitant, who had chosen, as it seemed, so untimely an hour for his advent, the fancy of our enthusiastic friend conjured up in vivid detail the wild, barbaric features of the Scandinavian warrior—the gigantic, blood-besmeared form of the "Dragon"-crested and iron-shirted Askew himself! And now the reader, bearing in mind the tocsin of alarm which we rang out at the close of the last chapter, will probably expect that, at the next eventful moment, the prodigious figure of the terrific Northman loomed through the mirky gloom of the expanding porch-way. There, indeed, stood the son of Denmark; but not in the stormy guise of the war-child of Odin.

A tall, thin stranger, somewhat past the middle age, yet of robust and active appearance, challenged the Antiquary's observation. He wore a travelling-cap of scarlet velvet, trimmed with sable; a large black wig, of peculiar fashion; a dark-green, single-breasted coat without collar, furnished with gilt buttons curiously embossed; a long lace cravat; and broad ruffles at the wrists. The crimson riband of the Order of the "Amaranth" of Sweden (founded by Queen Christina, and called, in Swedish, by the name of "Amaranta,") was conspicuous in the left-hand button-hole of his under-coat; while round his neck appeared the blue ribbon of some other Order. His upper-garment, composed of a black, fleecy material, was profusely braided, and trimmed and lined with Astrachan fur. A gold-headed walking-stick of antique and foreign appearance, and a diamond ring of striking brilliancy, exhibited additional marks of the owner's social distinction. Directing the reader's attention to the features of the new comer, we may remark that there was a wild and restless expression in his very dark eyes, that spoke of deep mental inquietude; while a sign of care or disappointment was strongly engraved on his brow. A short grizzly beard, and a redundant moustache of glossy blackness, heightened the exotic character of his physiognomy. His skin, either from the effects of climate, or peculiarity of constitution, appeared to have been died in saffron, or bore the still nearer trace of that *terra-sienna* colour, which we see

attributed by the pencils of Adrian van Ostade and his contemporaries to the portraits of the old alchemists in the Dutch, Flemish, and German schools of painting. Yet was there much in his countenance that was interesting; feeling and passion were prominently marked; and there seemed to lurk under the shade of gloom which time had thus habitually impressed upon his aspect, a native frankness and sociability, which were at once cordial and engaging. He now apologized, with mild and pleasing address, for the unseasonable interruption of his visit, announcing himself as the Chevalier Dr. Jule (6) Dánskiölldr, emeritus professor of philosophy and letters in the northern university of Kiobenhaun (7); and adding that he had intelligence of extraordinary and immediate interest to communicate to Dr. Sir Ernest Oldworthy.

With eager and hospitable welcome did the Antiquary salute the learned comer; from whom he now felt assured that he was about to receive some mysterious enlightenment on the grand object of his literary research—the lost history of his venerated Hreopandún; in reference to which he had so recently extended his knowledge, through the acquisition of unexpected documents. Nor was he doomed to be disappointed. Such, indeed, though attended with far more wonderful details, and with a stranger accession of personal interest than the wildest stretch of imagination could have promised, was the meditated

purpose of the stranger in addressing him. But we shall best discharge our duty, as faithful chroniclers, by giving in terms, as well as in substance—so far at least as our resources will allow, the extraordinary communication which awaited the ear of our ancient friend. Declining, for the present, each earnestly-repeated offer of refreshment, the Chevalier Dánskiölldr, after gravely adjusting his beard, and curling up the points of his moustache, addressed his anxious auditor in the manner recorded in the ensuing chapter. Before we say anything further, however, we may repeat our hint to the reader, in the words of an old friend of early days (so to speak from the familiar recollection of his delightful works), the author of "Adelgitha," "Feudal Tyrants," &c.,—"Be convinced that you are wide awake, for what I am going to tell you is so strange, that you would scarce believe it in a dream." Yet, let us also bring to mind the common remark, that the romance of *real* life frequently exceeds, in an extraordinary degree, the studied novelties of fiction.

CHAPTER III.

A TALE OF WONDER.

ALON. This is as strange a maze as e'er men trod:
And there is in this business *more than nature*
Was ever conduct of.

Tempest, Act v. sc. 1.

PAR. Why, 'tis the rarest argument of wonder that hath shot out in our latter times.

BER. And so 'tis.

All's Well that Ends Well, Act ii. sc. 3.

"AFTER discharging, for a period of twenty-three years, the duties of a professor in the University of Kiobenhaun, I retired about four years since, into the country; where, in the neighbourhood of my native place, I designed to pass the remainder of my days, in rural occupation and literary leisure. The near château of an old and attached pupil, the Baron van Eikinskialldi, with its proud stores of feudal magnificence, and the princely library established by his remote ancestors, afforded a frequent and agreeable relief from the monotonous seclusion of the village of Okolni. The many rare and inedited manuscripts contained in my noble friend's collection, presented

most valuable opportunities of adding to the materials which I was accumulating for an historical work, based on original research. Accordingly, I passed much of my time under the Baron's hospitable roof; sharing in the kind attentions of his amiable and interesting family. As time passes, and I have much of importance to state, I shall compress as closely as possible, the subordinate passages of my narrative, and address myself to its main features as undeviatingly as circumstances will allow. To proceed at once to the leading point. Let me anticipate, while I yet hope to remove the smile of incredulous import with which you will receive the intimation, that a *dream* of extraordinarily-vivid and absorbing interest, which occurred to me on the night of the 25th of May last, was the primary link in the chain of remarkable events which have this night brought me, thus unexpectedly, under your widely-distant roof."

There was a solemnity so deep and impressive in the air and utterance of the speaker, that, disposed as Sir Ernest Oldworthy might have been, under ordinary circumstances, to treat such an announcement with levity, he now expressed himself anxious to give the most grave and considerate attention to any statement, however disanalogous to customary facts, which his guest might find occasion to deliver, an assurance that seemed greatly to relieve the feelings of the narrator, who thus proceeded:—

"My dream was as follows. I reclined, methought,

in a cavernous recess, or grotto, beside a fountain, whose waters fell, with a lulling and reverberating sound, into a basin of ancient and sculptured marble. The breeze swept, with a hollow moan, through the vaulted cavity, rustling the darkly-featured ivy that hung around its entrance. My eye rested on the rim of the basin, which seemed to bear a runic inscription, and, while yet pondering on the characters in a mood of solemn feeling, I heard a sudden and subterranean sound, and immediately an opening appeared in the rock, disclosing, in its wild and faded majesty, the figure of an ancient skald, whose beard of silvered-yellow swept his girdle, while his wasted arm grasped, as in eager enthusiasm, a harp of rude yet peculiar construction. He spoke, in tones of thrilling and inconceivable energy, these words:—'Stranger! the mystic voice of Fate calls thee to a work of mighty need. It is allotted to thee to undo the bonds of charmed sleep that enthrall the brave and adventurous Askew, son of the renowned Veigur, of the kindred of Hlevangur, and of the race of Odin. Know that he lieth spell-bound by the devilish arts of the Nibelunglandic magician, Nyradur, in his palace-hall of Hreopandún, now called 'Repton,' or 'Repingdon on the Trent,' in the isle of Britain. Go thither; seek out thy fellow-worker in the task of destiny, known there by the name of Ernest Oldworthy, and with him and thee will I, though unseen, be present, to aid you in the noble act of

restoring the living-dead to his ancient inheritance—to the wave-built throne of Hleidra. Stranger! as thou reverest or despisest this warning, may the blessing or the curse of the great Odin and his descendants be thine for ever!' The rock closed, with a sound like the tremulous roll of faint and far-off thunder; and, for a few moments afterwards, a strain of the wildest and most solemn music hung about the spot.

"So deep was the impression which this singular dream left upon my mind, that for more than a month I returned, at every solitary moment, and often indeed when engaged in the charms of converse with the many noble and distinguished visitors of the castle, to the one engrossing theme of my heart—the dread injunction I had received; and which the dictates of reason in vain urged me to consider as the illusion of sleep. The names of Askew, Hreopándún, and Oldworthy, sounded continually in my ear; and, in the still and lonely hours of the night, they hung upon me as a spell that banished all other recollections. Nightly, too, did I expect to meet again the mysterious apparition, armed with the terrors of resentment at my non-obedience to his imperious summons. But, by slow degrees, the weight was withdrawn from my spirits; the futility of my former apprehensions became so apparent, as to provoke a sense of indignant self-disgust at the extreme folly of which I had been susceptible; and I congratulated

myself on the small share of prudence that had prevented me from making known the existence of so idle a superstition.

"I pass over the space of three months engaged, for the greater part, in study; and recall to mind the terrible repetition of my dream, under altered features of dread, on the night of the 16th of August following:

"Methought I stood, in the dusk of evening, in a lofty hall hung round with armour, shields, and weapons of war. A huge flag, of sable hue, bearing the device of a 'Golden Dragon,' was suspended from a massive pillar, and pointed majestically towards the sculptured roof. A feeble and sultry breeze at times slowly agitated its heavy folds. Never had I trod so lonely and sad a scene as that around me. The empty visors of the trophied walls seemed to look down in mockery of the footstep which invaded that hall of the departed! Save the melancholy wave, and the dull, sighing sound of the vast banner, not a motion or echo relieved the heart from the vague yet terrible apprehension, that nature herself was no more—that death, eternal death, had spread his giant sceptre over the ruined world, and that this was his palace-seat! One sable trophy, of colossal size, seemed to speak the prodigious form of the dreadful owner. The noise of my own footfall distressed me; and, in studious silence, and with shuddering awe, I sought a low bench in the centre of the spacious and momentarily more dusky apartment. A horrible faintness oppressed me. I felt

that I was immured in that desolate hall, as the last victim to the Mighty Usurper—the only living descendant of the wide family of the human race! A thousand strange and appalling visions started up, in wild succession, before my unbidding fancy; and one, the often recurring and crowning horror, was, that the fell, gigantic monster who ruled, in those dim and tenantless halls, over the void sphere of chaotic desolation, would shortly blast my sight with his loathly terrors, and strain me, with exulting ferocity, in his cold and snake-like grasp! Then came upon me the dreadful idea, that I was under the ban of incipient madness. It gained upon me—I felt my brain burn; and, rising with a shout that rang like the peal of a thousand trumpets through the awe-chilled silence of that lone and tomb-like habitation, I cried aloud,—'Yes, I am Death! the only ruler here! Who shall dispute my right?' In an instant afterwards, a crash of volleyed thunders shook the hall to its foundation: the armour and weapons clashed with horrible uproar: flashes of green-hued and livid lightning played around that sable flag, with its 'Dragon' of meteor-gold, and which was now agitated with furious violence: the rush of mighty winds burst open the folding-doors at the end of the hall; and there, in savage but majestic wrath, stood the mysterious Skald whom I had seen in my former vision! His eye, burning with horrid anger, was riveted on me. At length he spoke:—'Miscreant! darest thou impeach the oracles of Fate?

Art thou stronger than Destiny? Is it for thine own base ease, that the kingly son of Odin lieth entombed, in death-like trance, under the ban of the devilish Nyradur? Know, wretched driveller, that I have received power to torment thee, until thou executest the needful task committed to thee! Again, I bid thee haste to Hreopandún; seek thy work-mate in the yoke of destiny, whom thou wilt find there under the name of Ernest Oldworthy; and again do I promise to be with you, though unseen, to aid the mighty act of restoring the charnelled prince to his just inheritance—to the wave-built throne of Hleidra! Stranger! as thou reverest or despisest this warning, be the blessing or the curse of the great Odin and his descendants thine and for ever!' The vast folding-doors slowly and solemnly closed; again the flag, with the 'Golden Dragon,' waved calmly as before; the armour hung motionless on the walls; and a strain of tremulous and mournful music mingled with the moan of the dying thunder.

"I will not dwell, with any degree of particularity, on the effect of this second visitation of midnight terror. The strange individuality of the spectre, and the circumstantial nature of its warning; the surprising coincidence of features in either dream; as well as the still more singular variation of kindred and peculiar objects addressed to the imagination, filled me with doubt, fear, and astonishment. The Runic fountain and grotto, and the hall of 'Dragon'-shields, were evidently connected together by the

hidden process of some mysterious agency, whose source of operation was wrapt in darkest night. For a time I watched every act I committed—every thought I breathed—with the jealous eye of an inquisitor; dreading to detect some lurking tendency to the malady of which I had imagined myself a prey, in the wild suggestions of sleep. My books and rural amusements were now thrown aside. I sought society, but retired from it as soon as gained. One moment I determined to obey the command imposed upon me by the fearful disturber of my repose, and at the next I shrank from an idea of the self-contempt which the execution of a visionary and fruitless journey would entail. My friends observed my altered looks and habits, and counselled, but in vain, change of air and scene. I still doubted the freedom of my mind from the taint of insanity; and this distressing suspicion induced me to keep aloof from the world.

"But I am proceeding too far in this deviation from the main and influential facts of my story. Suffice it then to say, that the lapse of a few months saw me restored to former cheerfulness, and to the usual routine of familiar occupation. I again sought society, and, in the circle of the Baron's family, found a return of every happy feeling which I had formerly enjoyed. There were moments, however, when I dwelt with solemn reflections on the mystical coherence and strange character of the scenes so vividly depicted by the wand of sleep; and I formed, at

length, a resolution, that should I again be visited by the same visionary alarm, I would resolutely demand from the instigator of my inquietude, some substantial or waking token of the reality of the mandate; on the accordance or refusal of which should depend the act of my obedience. Nor was the occasion long delayed. It came upon me fraught with even direr impressions of horror than any which I had yet sustained. On the first night of the present month, the following scene and circumstances were presented to me with even more than wakeful distinctness of ideality, in the shadowy world of midnight vision:—

"Methought that I paced, in distracted fear, the nsular ridge of what appeared to be a lofty mountain buried in the sea. On every side stretched away a dark expanse of waveless waters, whose bounds, or rather, whose visual outline, was veiled in impenetrable mists. There was a feeling far more terrible in the deep, unnatural sleep of that wide waste of ocean, and in the thick, obscuring gloom that cloaked its far solitude, than the wildest storm-waves and fiercest lightnings could have produced, in the mood of impatience which I then experienced. Slowly, yet with threatening certainty, did that black and tideless flood encroach upon the small remaining portion of earth on which I stood. Death, ghastly and monstrous, stared me in the face. To have wrestled with the stern embrace of the foaming billow would have appeared a luxurious recall of the

energies of the soul, ere its last departure from mortal strife; but to sink into the crawling and slimy deep of that vast and fog-bound circle of darkness, was like the doom of being swathed in a coffin, and lowered as a corpse to the earth, while the cramped and impeded limbs were denied the power of resistance!

"Every hope of escape had now departed; yet instinctively I drew nearer to the loftier elevation of the small remnant of land that must soon fall a prey to the devouring waters. A strange object suddenly attracted my eye, and inspired a vague hope of preservation.

"From an iron ring of massive form, secured in the centre of a broad block of granite, which latter was engraved with the figure of a dragon, and with many unknown characters and strange lines intermixed with Runic letters, proceeded an immense chain, that extended far away into the veil of mist which concealed the distant wilderness of ocean, seeming to be attached to some remote object lying upon the sable depths thus obscured. Not a moment that offered a chance of escape was to be lost; and I bitterly regretted that I had not earlier discovered this probable means of rescue. My conjecture naturally pointed to a boat, as the object connected with the chain ; and could I draw it ashore, I might succeed in disengaging it from its moorings, and commit myself, under its protection, to the dangers of the deep. Any change that brought excitement, though with wilder peril, and

even less probability of escape, seemed to oppose an enviable relief to the horrors of that dismal suspense! Summoning my whole strength to the task, I succeeded in the attempt to hale the still unseen burthen towards the land. It was a work of intense labour; and, but for the additional power which a sense of danger afforded, must soon have mastered my exertions. The line of links seemed endless. Notwithstanding the vast accumulation of circling folds that lay piled beside me, still it stretched away over the dark inundation, and into the lurid mist beyond, till it was lost in the dense obscurity of that awful barrier. Such, too, was the opposing force of its weight, that I could not for a moment desist from the exercise of my fullest strength, lest it should drag me into the abyss; and, again and again, did despair counsel me to quit my hold, or suffer myself to be precipitated by its momentum, into the frowning depth of waters. But the whisper of hope still prevailed, and as often did I arouse my irresolute powers to renewed exertion; while link after link of that enormous chain still appeared, and added to the sinuous accumulation at my feet. At length my vigour began to abate—my determination to give way. I was about to relax my hold, when a rapid glance at the near-approaching tide told me that a few moments would accomplish my destruction if I ceased to persevere. The conviction lent supernatural energy to my efforts; and once more I redoubled my exertions, till exhaustion again approached.

I now saw the black, eddiless flood crouching close to the extreme point of rock on which I stood. One mighty and last struggle, and, peradventure, my task might draw near its completion. It did; and I beheld looming through the mirky fog, the imperfect details of some dark, gigantic body, upon which I scarcely dared to gaze, lest it should carry death to my expectations of succour. Gradually did the approaching form put forth a connected outline, and the prodigious appearance of a sable bark, thronged with pallid and corpse-like figures, and having a dark flag ensigned with a 'Golden Dragon,' struck my despairing glance! My last wild hope of escape expired! Fear and horror took possession of my soul! Even at this distant moment, the icy chill of recollected anguish rushes back upon my bosom! Never can I forget the terror of that fatal moment! Louder than the thunder that pealed convulsively over the yawning abyss, was the rattling and ringing sweep of the uncoiling chain, which had burst from my failing grasp! A band of vivid lightnings descending like rain upon the black solitude beneath, shewed me the unfortunate vessel, now at a remote distance, urged by the force of an irresistible torrent, and pitching obliquely over a broken ledge of perpendicular rocks into what strangely appeared some deeper abyss of waters beyond! The abrupt violence of the receding chain had torn away the massive ring by which it was secured; and the dreadful thought assailed me, that I had deprived of

existence the hapless beings, who, in some great and sudden inundation of the land, had placed their hopes of safety in its support! I sank to the ground in an agony of tears! I called upon the waters to overwhelm me! I upbraided them—cursed them for sparing me! 'Miserable wretch!' pronounced a voice, whose well-remembered tones rushed like chords of fire through my heart; while, at the next moment, I caught the terrific eye of the mysterious Skald. 'Miserable wretch! pretendest thou so much sorrow for the wreck of yon fatal bark, while thou permittest the sovereign Askew and his thegns to lie entranced in their living tomb? Know, that yon phantom-freighted vessel with its 'Dragon' ensign lying motionless on the black and mist-bound deep, and chained to the gigantic stone with the cabalistical characters, was but a symbol or type of the heroic prince and his war-mates in their dreary prison-house of Hreopandún.

"'The 'Dragon' Hall, which thou before sawest, was the once magnificent abode of the royal chief at Hleidra; and the Runic cave, of thy earlier vision, is the present retiring-place of Ernest Oldworthy. Jule Dánskiölldr! I speak to thee for the third and last time! Nightly shalt thou gaze on the desolate expanse before thee—on yon black and waveless sea, with its brooding mists; and on the mystic chain looming from the point of this dreary rock with its spell-wrought slab, inscribed with magic figures;

nightly shalt thou be surrounded with the slowly-advancing tide that threatens to devour thee; and, in thy wild and fevered hope of escape, thou shalt again and again rally thy exhausted strength to draw ashore the wished for boat—doomed but to behold, in all its original terrors, the loathly apparition of the 'Long Serpent,' with her spectral crew; and to watch her reel down the dark tide of overwhelming waters, by the lurid light of the tempest-blaze! This shalt thou do and suffer, till thou proceedest to accomplish the task enjoined thee by Destiny.' 'Give me,' I cried, 'some waking proof of the truth of the mission, and thy bidding shall be executed.' 'Be it so,' he replied, while his features, relieved of their fierce expression, wore a look of grave and awful dignity: 'I will give thee THREE TOKENS, whereby thou shalt surely know that the suggestions of idle fancy have no share in thy purposed enterprise. Stand thou to-morrow, at noon, beneath the Gallery Tower, in the Base Court of the Castle, and then shalt thou, as well as those with thee, hear the clocks of the churches of Kiobenhaun, known by the names of the 'Blessed Virgin,' of the 'Holy Ghost,' of 'Saint Peter,' and of the 'thrice-holy Trinity,' proclaim the mid-day hour. Their distance from Okolni Castle is, as thou well knowest, above forty-eight *rasts* (8). Thereafter, proceed thou to the circular glade in the Linden grove, called the 'Runic Ring,' and within the butt of the central and solitary oak-tree, called the

'Giant's Staff,' which at this very moment is struck to the earth with lightning, shalt thou find a sculptured case of black marble, inscribed with magic figures, and containing the record of the 'Doom of King Askew.' And, two hours after sunset, shall the Baron, meeting thee in the Lower Lobby of the Swan Tower, as thou returnest from thy customary walk in the Plaisance, invite thee to a private conference in the White Gallery; and, after disclosing sundry matters, ask thee to go to England, in company with his eldest son. Stranger! for the last time, I pronounce to thee the blessing or curse of the great Odin and his descendants, as thou reverest or despisest this warning!' He smote his harp with impassioned wildness, and its soaring tones mingled majestically with the breeze that agitated his aged locks and loosely-flowing drapery. A small interval of azure sky was unfolded amidst those lowering heavens; he gazed intently upon it; other harps seemed to join with his own; and a smile of the most benignant sweetness spread itself over his lofty features. His eye then turned with a calm and grateful expression towards myself—the mists again closed around him, though with a silvery lightness; and, as the last faint and solemn notes of his receding harp died on the gale, the visioned scene became robed in darkening shadows. After an interval of deep and soothing sleep, I awoke to gaze on the radiant light of morning, bearing with it the refreshing sounds of cheerful and familiar converse."

CHAPTER IV.

THE "THREE TOKENS."

ANT S. Or sleep I now, and think I hear all this?
What error drives our eyes and ears amiss?
Until I know this sure uncertainty,
I'll entertain the offer'd fallacy.
Comedy of Errors, Act ii. sc. 2.

"AND were these tokens of confirmation indeed afforded?" eagerly interrupted the Antiquary, his keen eye impressively fixing itself on the answering glance of the stranger; when the latter, replying to his gaze with a look of steady and solemn assurance, and in a voice agitated by the emotion that connects itself with the delivery of some strange and momentous intelligence, added the following declaration to his most extraordinary narrative:—

"Most sacredly do I pledge myself that they were!" And, as he spoke, he crossed himself with an expression of devout appeal, as attaching a more than human responsibility to the assertion. "I am also prepared to lay before you the notarially-witnessed attestations of those parties, whose evidence I deemed a necessary adjunct to my own." And, at the same moment, the

Professor withdrew from an inner pocket of his under-garment a folded paper, and an article which, being divested of its carefully-adjusted covering, proved to be a small tablet of ash-wood; observing that the former was the certificate to which he had alluded, bearing the signatures of Archimbald Baron van Eikinskialldi, of the Chevalier Götz Hubert Maximilian von Motanheim, his brother-in-law, and of the Pastor, Hans Motsogner, his chaplain ; and that the latter was the mysterious record found at the extremity of the northern avenue of the Linden Grove, at Okolni Castle.

"My narrative," he added, "draws near to its conclusion. Before I descended to the breakfast table, I committed the particulars of my dream to writing; and, having secured the contents from observation, by the imposition of a private seal, I presented the paper to the Baroness on joining the domestic circle, desiring her to keep it unopened till I should ask for its return, in the evening of the third succeeding day. Your late enquiry, worthy sir, has anticipated the sequel. But I would refer briefly to the circumstances connected with the discovery of the ashen tablet. The first intelligence that met my ear, after the morning salutation, was, that the great oak, called the 'Giant's Staff,' which had for ages been the chief pride and ornament of the sylvan domain that skirted the boundary of the Plaisance, had been felled to the earth by lightning; and that the aged and venerable form of

this patriarch of the woods, riven asunder through the entire length of the bole, and stripped of every atom of bark, lay prostrate in majestic ruin; its vast forest of branches having been crushed into powder, save one large limb that lay at a distance of eighty paces from the blackened trunk, exhibiting a brittle substance that pulverized at the touch. To add to the strangeness of the occurrence, no sign of tempest, or even of atmospheric excitability, had been observed during the night by the foresters, or the night-watch of the castle; but 'heaven' (to make use of the expression of an old writer), 'can as easily, and with as slight an effort, blast an oak as trample a mushroom!' Proceeding at the time appointed to the spot, I drew forth, in the presence of the Baron and other parties, an oblong case, or reliquary, of black sculptured marble, inscribed with Runic characters, and bearing the relieved device of a couchant 'Dragon' on the lid, and which contained the singular memorial now claiming your very attentive observation.

"I need not dwell on the surprise which this circumstance produced in the circle of distinguished guests then remaining at the castle; nor refer more particularly to the previous astonishment elicited by the distinct announcement of noon by the distant clocks of the metropolis, which I had prepared them, with myself, to witness. I have but to state, in conclusion, that three days afterwards the Baron's eldest son and myself sailed for England, in direct pursu-

ance of instructions conveyed to me by the Baron, at the period and under the circumstances foretold by the wonderful visitant of my couch. On arriving in London I learned, for the first time, from an old literary correspondent, that there was indeed a village called 'Repton,' which, under the Saxon name of Hreopandún, had been the chief city of the kingdom of Mercia; that it was the seat of a celebrated public school; and that a young friend of his, then resident in London, had there received his education. A channel was thus readily opened for ascertaining the further necessary facts, that there was an eminence near the same village, called Askew Hill; and that a gentleman bearing the identical designation pointed out by the Skald, and also referred to in the Runic tablet, resided in the immediate vicinity. After a suitable interval of refreshment, I quitted London by one of the public coaches, and arrived in due course at the neighbouring town of Derby; whence, by a private voiture, I proceeded to the ultimate point of destination indicated by the Skald; namely, to Hreopandún, now called Repton, or Repingdon on the Trent, in the isle of Britain! And now I have the equally-exciting satisfaction of finding myself in the presence of that Ernest Oldworthy, whose name has been so mysteriously and romantically associated with my own. I must next confide in your advice and assistance, as respects the conduct of this most wonderful, and I may add, awful undertaking."

"They are most willingly yours," replied Sir Ernest Oldworthy; who, after blending his expressions of astonishment with those of the stranger, proceeded, with intense anxiety, to inspect the curious record discovered in the Giant's Staff.

CHAPTER V.

THE RECORD OF THE "GIANT'S STAFF."

ANT S. The fellow is distract, and so am I;
And here we *wander in illusions*;
Some blessed power deliver us!
Comedy of Errors, act iv. sc. 3.

THIS strange curiosity consisted of two oblong pieces of ash-wood (9), about nine inches long and five broad, joined together with a pair of silver hinges, precisely similar to those attached to Harallď's Gests of King Askew, and furnished with two small hooks and staples of the same material. Its exterior was painted crimson, with a border of black, and the edges were relieved with gilding. On the tablet presented within was the following inscription in the Norse, or Old Danish language, rudely painted in red Runic (10) letters, on a pale yellow ground:—

"The Writing of Vindalfur, the Son of Haugspere, of the Race of Odin, Hofgodar (11) of the Irminsula (12) at Hleidra, beareth Memory, by Solemn Decree of the All-Father, as revealed by the Dysæ (13), on the Day of the Great Offering to Irminsula, that, in the Second year after the Sack of Hreopandün, in

Mercia, by the Danish Conquerors, the Nibelunglandic Enchanter Nyradur, then being at the Castle of Pont Audemer, in Neustria, did, at the Suit of Alberic Count of Mellent, Brother of Cariberta, Wife of Ceolwulf, King of Mercia, cast a deep and mighty sleep on the famous Askew, King of Hleidra, and on his Thegns and Followers, in the First Hour of Morning, on the Day succeeding the Great Festival of the Sun, as they sat at the Mead-Board in the Cryptic Chambers beneath the Castle built by the Romans at Hreopandún, and called the 'Eastern Fort.' (14). And it was ordained, as now recorded, that Ernest Oldworthy and Jule Dánskiölldr, Descendants of the renowned Veigur, of the Race of Odin, should, at the Period which should happen to complete the Space of Eight Hundred and Fifty years from the Date of such Enchantment, namely, between the Hours of Twelve and One, before Noon, on the Day which should then succeed Christmas Day, in the year of the Christian Reckoning One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twenty Six, enter into the Mead Hall and other Chambers of the noble Askew, by a Secret Entrance which should then be found, covered by a Broad Stone engraved with Runic and other Characters, and having the Form of a 'Dragon' painted thereon, beneath the Western Side of an Ash Tree situate on the Crown of a Hill which should then be called after the Name of Askew; and where the Castle built by the Romans, and known as the 'Eastern Fort,' formerly stood:—and then

should Ernest Oldworthy, taking forth from the Left-hand Side of the Tunic of the Royal Sleeper a certain Vial, pour thereout into the King's Right Ear Seven Drops of the Blood of Nidhöggur, the Dragon of Nidar-Fiolli; and, turning his Face towards the North (15), pronounce, severally with each Drop, One of the Seven following Words, in the Order here mentioned, namely, 'Hama! Flinnus! Siba! Zernebogus! Faul! Neccus! Flynt' (16)! And he should thereunto add the following Adjuration, thrice repeated—'The Horn of Heimdallur hath Seven Times sounded!—The Seven Seals of the Magic Scroll of Nyradur have perished in the Mystic Blood of the Dragon!—The Voice of the All-Father bids you depart!—The Dysæ cry unto the Sleepers,—AWAKE!' Whereupon should the Ban be abolished; and the mighty Askew and his Followers should suddenly start up and be delivered from their uncouth and baleful Trance. Dated at the Temple of Irminsula, at Hleidra, in the Seventh Hour of the Night, called Moedrenech; and in the Winter of Odin." * * * (This latter date was written in some Oriental character not understood by Sir Ernest Oldworthy or his guest) (17).

"The 850 years," observed the Professor, "will expire about two hours hence!"

"We reckon time in this country after a strange fashion," suggested the Antiquary, after a lapse of some minutes, during which he examined, with close scrutiny, the singular relic; "the legal commence-

ment of the year, in one part of the kingdom, differs by the space of nearly three months, from the legal commencement of the year in another part of the same kingdom; and also from the general usage throughout the whole! The inhabitants of much the greatest part of Europe adopt the correction of the calendar made by Pope Gregory, in 1582; and it were much to be wished that we should establish one uniform method of computing time, and of fixing the dates of all matters which may be transacted by most parts of Europe (18). Now, according to what mode of reckoning are we to establish the date of our prescribed visitation to the chambers of King Askew? Is this the appointed period or not?"

"According to the Julian method of calculation," replied Professor Dánskiölldr, "it is doubtless so. And as this mode of computation most generally obtains in your country, and is exclusively used in Denmark, where the instrument was written; while the period indicated by the tablet refers to an event appointed to take place here, and through our joint instrumentality; we must infer that the style intended is that which is chiefly in use amongst our countrymen. And, indeed, the impatience manifested by the spectral visitant would seem to point to the near execution of its mandate. The term of the reputed enchantment will, in accordance with such a calculation, expire about two hours hence: we have need, therefore, to be speedy in our arrangements."

"My wishes await on yours," said Sir Ernest; "but 'let us wet our commissions first,' as they say in the navy.

'Sit,—and some wine. A health to Lepidus!'"

and, apologizing for the absence of attendants, he busied himself in placing before his visitor a straw-covered flask of Montefiascone, of the great vintage of 1706; a dark-blue, cobwebbed flask of veritable old Rüdesheim, that, according to the Greystock cellar-book, had been one hundred and seventeen years in bottle; a case of spirits; some dried articles of confectionary and fruits; and the incidental accompaniments of hot and cold water, lemons, sugar, *atque iis similia.*

"But to return, my dear sir, to this curious record," he remarked, after duly evincing the requisite degree of attention to ensure the comfortable reception of his guest,—"the circumstances conspiring to throw an air of credibility over its testimony are most extraordinary. In addition to those already mentioned, I may now communicate the fact that there *is*, as suggested by the impressions of your dream, a grotto with a sculptured basin of marble in my grounds; and that, in that very spot, I have again and again, under the influence of sleep, beheld the same sea-encircled rock with the Runic stone, and the chained bark; oftentimes, too, have I paced the solitary 'Hall of Dragon Shields,' with its black,

gigantic banner, although with these scenes was associated no revelation or incident of terror, such as occurred to your more painful notice. I saw not, for instance, the spectral inmates of the ship, but discerned it afar off, reposing on a bright sea, under a canopy of cloudless azure, whilst the 'Dragon' Hall was gilded with the lustre of a serene sunset. The peculiar vividness and strange repetition of these dreams dwelt, for days together, on my thoughts; and I aroused every latent effort of memory to trace their occurrence to any suggestive incident of wakeful experience. Such endeavours, however, were vainly made, and an impression sank into my mind that they were mysteriously connected with some event in the womb of time, whose coming was thus shadowed forth as a preparatory monition. And so, indeed, has it proved; since I find myself called upon, and self-prompted, to accept a challenge involving the wildest and most singular results that were ever anticipated by mortal enterprise. I now also see, as in a mirror, the reflected accumulation of a thousand shadowy trains of thought, pointing to the existence of some mysterious sympathy with the legendary hero of Repton, and which seemed, at the time, to invade the imagination with a strange and arbitrary power for which I could not account. There remained no historical vestige of the object of my musings, and tradition only recorded the manner and place of his death. Where nothing, therefore, was known of the

actions of the individual—not a single fact around which fancy could twine her airy threads, it was most remarkable that his image should dwell so impressively in my thoughts. Singular, too, was the fact that I should accidentally receive, this very evening, three very curious volumes treating of this obscure yet fame-worthy warrior. But the mystery is now explained.—Mr. Professor, the wine is with you. These sugar-biscuits may recommend themselves as the production of my niece's fair hand. *Heja!*—'Here is a dish of leather-coats for you.'—Come, we will drink to the immortal memory of the Foundress of the Order of the 'Amaranth,' the illustrious Queen Christina. I, as well as yourself, possess its honoured cross, the gift of no less chivalric a hand than that of Charles XII."

The toast was drunk with hands joined, and other evidences of fraternal sentiment, as well as of fitting respect for the source which had originated these pleasing ties of attachment. No one, indeed, but a brother of the same order can judge of the feeling of sympathy which a communion in the honours and privileges of the chivalric league can impart. There is no fraternity, save that of blood, which can equal it in devotion and disinterestedness of character.

"This remarkable document," continued Sir Ernest, again referring to the ash-wood tablet, "confers upon us the enviable honour of relationship to the noble Askew; since, in the first address of the Skald, he

was stated to be the son of the 'renowned Veigur,' from whom we are here said to be descended. From Veigur there is, as I remember, a connected table of genealogy reaching up to Odin. Thus may we claim the privilege of ranking gods as well as kings amongst our ancestors. 'Zounds! I will have a flash of lightning for my crest, like the giant Phoverus, as observed by the prince of French poets, Peter de Ronsard—

> '—The murrian on his head
> Well crested doth the tempest's bolt resemble
> Sent down from Jupiter in summer monthes.'

And yet, my good friend, I ought rather to say with my old favourite D'Avenant—

> 'Let me take down a cushion, and pray,
> For I shall have more dignitie than will suffice
> To damne a monke.'"

Yielding to the idlest ebullitions of a humorous and playful mind, and indulging the same careless spirit that banished all recollection of the gravity of the learned antiquary, he added:—

"Egad, I feel as proud as 'some blockheadly mayor of a corporation, with a country mace carried before him like a chocolate mill.' Professor Dánskiöldr, I lately extended to you the hand of a stranger, let me now offer you that of a kinsman. In sooth, *mi amicissime*, it is melancholy to think how many Dánskiölldrs and Oldworthys have 'gone on their way

from their dwellings' (as the sagas express the last long journey that man performs), ignorant of their pre-eminent claims to ancestorial rank. By the kingly eagle, the early armorial bearing of Alexander the Great, and which formed also the figure of the chief standard of the Romans—by the kingly eagle, I say, which was borne in the shields of Gawaine, Gueriet, Agravain the Proud, Gueheres, and Nordet, five of the noblest knights of the 'Round Table,'

> 'I'll have
> My very dogge bark i' th' courtly garbe.'

Passion o' me! I have often wished in my heart that some of my meeker neighbours in 'clouted shoon' could shame the petty, bragging aristocrat of a few generations, by pulling out a chart of pedigree reaching, through kings and queens, and sultans and emperors, up to Adam himself; as many of them, doubtless, might be entitled to do, if facts could be proven. 'And what wonder,' as old Fuller says, 'seeing, within fourteen generations, the royal blood of the Kings of Judah ran in the veins of plain Joseph, a painful carpenter.' He might have added that half a dozen generations have often sufficed to bring down the lofty crest and the towering spear, as saith the old French adage which we may thus English—

> 'One hundred years a banner-bearer;
> One hundred years a barrow-driver.'

Many a quaint old tractate on the 'blazon of gentrie,'

and the 'glorie of generositie,' many a huge volume and learned essay on the *res heraldica*—the 'art noble and misterie of the Herehaults,' have I, as it were, incorporated with mine own subtile indagations in genealogical science, and the noble science of arms and blazons. By the holy dog of Tobias, I am a very bloodhound in tracing the steps of a man's ancestors; and to this quickness of scent for the musty *memorabilia* of other years, I join the nocturnal powers of vision enjoyed by the cat. Yea, the more dim and obscure the path of inquiry, the more strongly can I discern the in-and-out turnings of a mazy question of pedigree. Woe for the base stem derived from hyssop root, that would fain boast itself of the cedar!

> 'I'm an old Jew at *genealogies!*'

as Florello somewhat quaintly remarks in the 'Just Italian;' or, as Castruchio says, in the 'Cruel Brother,'—

> 'A synagogue of Welsh Rabbys could not
> Expresse more skill in *genealogies*.'

Odsnigs! I have gloried in stripping many a proud genealogical table of its forged entries, and setting forth to the world a true reading. I have metamorphosed their *armigeri* and *generosi*, in the twinkling of an eye, into their proper shapes of linendrapers and money-scriveners, 'dealers and chapmen.' Ay, marry, by the reverend shade of old John of Salisbury

(19) have I; by yea and no, I have. As Buonateste says in the 'Platonick Lovers,'—

> '*My* lordship's subtle in *antiquities*,
> And has kept a very nice intelligence.'

Chevalier, the wine is again with you. *Hem tibi!*—Come, we will drink to the glorious memory of my late royal patron, Charles XII."

"I owe my own rank, as a *confrère* of the chivalry of the 'Amaranth,' to no less heroic a source," eagerly and proudly replied Dr. Dánskiölldr; his whole frame seeming to dilate with a consciousness of accumulated dignity and importance. The toast was drunk with a kind of speechless enthusiasm—a blending of sacred and august ideas too mighty for utterance! This eloquent silence was, at length, as agreeably as appropriately interrupted, by the Chevalier Dánskiölldr's production of an elegant gold snuff-box bearing, on its lid, an oval medallion-portrait in enamel of Charles the Twelfth, set with costly brilliants; and by the offer of a share of its contents to Sir Ernest; the snuff itself, as well as its magnificent receptacle, having been presented by that illustrious monarch to its happy possessor, as a memorial of his royal approbation of the Chevalier's *opus magnum*—a voluminous mythological lexicon of the North. After admiring the interesting relic, with all that enthusiastic pleasure and depth of emotion which were so characteristic of our honoured *virtuoso;* Sir Ernest raised the lid,

which was provided with diamond hinges, and drew forth, with an air of marked solemnity, a moderately sized pinch of the consecrated powder. Having held it near either nostril, for a few delightful moments (delightful, for, as he inhaled the impressive odour, his mind repictured many a glowing scene of past enjoyment in the court and capital of the august monarch), he took out his own snuff-box (a silver one, having, on the lid, a carved medallion bust of our King Charles the Second, made out of a portion of the wood of the Boscobel oak, and also displaying, on the interior surface, an engraved representation of the premises of William Penderell, the miller, who, with his wife, his mother, and his four brothers, was also introduced, as aiding in the monarch's escape, after the disastrous field of Worcester), and, having thrown into the fire the common-place contents, he substituted, with all fit preparation and due ceremony, the grand historical pinch in question; while he expressed with much natural eloquence, his grateful thanks to the donor of so interesting a *souvenir;* adding that every grain of that precious deposit should be thenceforth preserved by him with the most religious and devoted care. He then, in turn, pointed out to his guest a lock of Charles the Twelfth's hair, which had been presented to himself by that monarch's prime-minister, Górtz; and which he wore in a brooch formed in the shape of a heart, and adorned with splendid rubies; the crown and cipher* of the king

appearing in diamond sparks, in the centre of the setting. The occurrence of this little episode seemed to draw closer still the mutual sentiments of regard and respect, between our high-thoughted and enthusiastic *confrères;* who had already recognized so many and strong grounds of sympathy. "Similarity of minds is, all over the world, the source of friendship," as Dante observed to the Prince of Verona, on being asked by his Highness how he could account for the fact that, in the households of princes, the court fool was in greater favour than the philosopher.

"I have a very fine gold medal of Charles XII.," continued the Antiquary, "which was given to me by himself, on my presenting to his majesty a small treatise on the Palæography of the North. I will have it inlaid, within a setting of diamonds, in the lid of a gold snuff-box, which was bequeathed to me by Gustavus Adlerfeldt, gentleman of the bedchamber to his majesty, and author of the 'Life of the King,' and who was killed, in 1709, at the battle of Pultowa. This box once belonged, as appears by the royal arms engraved on four shields surrounding it, to the same distinguished sovereign, our most venerated patron; who gave it to my dear friend Adlerfeldt on a very interesting occasion. In it will I deposit, as in a more suitable receptacle, your cherished gift of snuff, originally received from himself. Oh, my friend and brother, if princes but knew the deep devotion which they might inspire in the breasts of the

emulous and enthusiastic in the paths of literature, by a bestowal of such condescending favours, in token of their royal countenance; how many honourable hearts that are now pining in obscurity and gloom, their labours unappreciated and despised by the great, would be made happy! How would the steeps of fame be ascended with a smiling and a courageous spirit; instead of a desponding, care-impeded, worn-down, miserable, soul-crushed exertion!

'Damp'd by the leaden hand of comfortless despair.'

*Genius is now a curse, rather than the glorious blessing it was meant to be to its hapless possessor. Instead of lifting him up, as on the wings of the eagle, to the high pinnacle of fame-cemented power, it is but as the ragged cloak of the beggar, marking him out as an object of cold derision and social ignominy.** But enough: it was said of old 'Happy is the man whom the king delighteth to honour.' 'In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favour is as a

* When Brindley, the celebrated engineer and projector of canals, was giving evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons in support of his favourite scheme, he was observed to speak very slightingly of rivers; and, on being questioned by one of the members, "For what, think you, did God Almighty create rivers?" he replied, with equal promptness and address, "To feed canals!" 'So, were we asked, by some speculative inquirer, for what, we thought, the aristocracy, or race of nobles, was chiefly created? we should answer, with similar readiness and satisfaction, "To pay due service and homage to men of genius."

cloud of the latter rain.' And again:—'The name of the king is a tower of strength.' And what says glorious old Shakspeare, ever my oracle and prince of teachers:—

'Is not the king's name forty thousand names?'

But alas! few monarchs are Charles the Twelfths! A man must have strong personal merit to appreciate and revere it in others. Come, my dear Dánskiölldr, let us drink to the glorious perpetuity, and increasing lustre, of the princely and honourable order of the Amaranth! *Floreat Amarantus!*" Here the Antiquary uncorked the Montefiascone; the Rudesheim having served as a whet to the palate, ere that delicious wine should impart the full zest of its rare and costly essence.

"But to return, Mr. Professor, to the subject of our present anxieties," continued Sir Ernest Oldworthy; "I may now mention certain circumstances which are opposed to that version of King Askew's story which has reached us in so extraordinary a manner. The 'Britannia Saxonica,' treating of the reign of the Danish tributary, Ceolwulf, asserts (as do the 'Northern Chronicles,' and the 'Annals of the Exploits of Askew,') that the remains of the hero were royally interred in a spacious vault excavated on an eminence near the river, beyond the burial-ground of the abbey-church of Hreopandún; the body of the chief being deposited in a stone coffin, around which

were carefully placed, side by side, the corpses of a hundred of his warlike followers, with their feet converging towards the central and principal object of sepulture. There is an elegy, or funeral-song, in the same records, purporting to be co-incident with the event itself; and which describes the mode of interment thus:—

> 'Deep in the night-black vault we laid him,
> In the dark, cold clasp of the dismal earth :
> With a hundred warrior-mates around him,
> His loved ones of the fight!'

"Now, as this Dirge, or Epicedium, makes no mention of the place of sepulture, it is evident that the annalist of the 'Exploits of Askew' (whose work is of an earlier date than the other chronicles), derived his information on the point from some other and more copious source. The writers of the 'Britannia Saxonica' and the 'Northern Chronicles,' who detail the same facts, may, nevertheless, have obtained their knowledge of them through some other channel than the 'Annals of King Askew's Exploits;' and thus we have three if not four distinct authorities vouching for the fact of the 'royal Dane's' interment at Repton, and to these I will add another."

The Antiquary then briefly detailed the particulars of the discovery of the giant's tomb, which took place in 1687; fully corroborating the circumstances recorded in relation to the burial of the monarch.

"In a close, west of the church," he said, "towards

the end of the last century, there was found not far from the surface a square of fifteen feet, enclosed by a wall once covered with stones laid in wooden joists, and containing a stone coffin, in which was a human skeleton nine feet long, surrounded by one hundred more of the common proportions, their feet pointing to it; the floor paved with broad flat stones, and entered by a door and stone steps forty yards from it, nearer the church and river. The old labourer, who found these, planted a sycamore over the spot, when he covered it up again." *

He then produced the volumes previously referred to, and pointed out the several passages descriptive of the event in question.

"Having produced evidences of burial, it might appear somewhat superfluous to refer to the previous fact of death," continued Sir Ernest; "yet I may observe that, as regards the dissolution of the King, the chronicle states, in a very detailed form, the various incidents connected therewith,—incidents of so public and remarkable a nature, that it is difficult to understand how a report of them could be called into

* In Mr. Haigh's valuable paper entitled "Historical and Descriptive Notes relating to the ancient Saxon monastery at Repton, Derbyshire," read before the British Archæological Association at their anniversary meeting, at Winchester, in 1845, and subsequently printed in their proceedings, will be found an account of the re-opening of this curious grave in 1785, the particulars of which Mr. Haigh derived, as therein acknowledged from the writer's forthcoming History of Repton.

existence, that had no foundation in fact; unless it were fabricated at a remotely-subsequent period, since a whole metropolis must have borne witness to its falsity."

"It is possible," suggested the Chevalier, "that the Glee-man who undertook the task of administering the sleeping-draught to King Askew and his followers, might, with the hope of a higher reward, or under the influence of the charms of Cariberta, reveal the secret of the plot, and thereby enable the King to assemble together, from some distant quarter, a body of captive Mercians, to supply the place of himself and his retainers on the night of the intended massacre; while he and his party should lie concealed within the cryptic recesses of the castle. The difficulty of personating the monarch (the only individual whose form might be identifiable by the Saxons, and this on account of his dignity as King, and his extraordinary stature), would be readily overcome by the mutilation of the unhappy representative's features—an act which the Glee-man might boastingly avouch as his own, when he admitted the conspirators to the work of carnage. We must infer, though, under such a supposition, that King Askew succeeded in obtaining, as his substitute, a person of the prodigious height of nine feet—a task, however, which, at that period, might not be so difficult as at present. We have many accounts of gigantic growth in those fierce and barbarous times, when the development of the frame was, for warlike pur-

poses, made an object of the earliest and most persevering attention — an object still the more important, as personal, hand-to-hand encounters prevailed in those days of simpler warfare; and it seems not altogether improbable, that in a multitude of instances, nature was more strongly assisted in the attainment of this superior stature, than from our present habits of life we should be led to imagine. Indeed, I have treated somewhat copiously this very subject, in my 'History of the Earlier Wars of Sweden.'"

"In Rouen, in 1509," observed Sir Ernest, with a peculiarly knowing look, that added to the emphasis of his speech, "in digging in the ditches near the Dominicans they found a stone tomb, containing a skeleton whose skull held a bushel of corn, and whose shin-bone reached up to the middle of the tallest man there, being about four feet long; and, consequently, the body must have been seventeen or eighteen feet high. Upon the tomb was a plate of copper, whereon was engraved—'In this tomb lies the noble and puissant lord, the Chevalier Ricon de Valmont, and his bones.' Rioland, a celebrated anatomist, who wrote in 1614, says that some years before there was to be seen in the suburbs of St. Germaine's, at Paris, the tomb of the giant Isoret, who was twenty feet high. Valence, in Dauphiné, is said to have possessed the bones of the giant Ducart, tyrant of the Vivarias, who was slain with an arrow by the Count de Cabillon, his

vassal. The Dominicans had a part of the shin-bone, with the articulation of the knee, and his figure painted in fresco, with an inscription shewing 'that this giant was twenty-two and a-half feet high; and that his bones were found in 1705 near the banks of the Merderi, a little river at the foot of the mountain of Crussol, upon which, tradition says, the giant dwelt.' That skeletons have been discovered of giants of a still more incredible size the works of numerous authors inform us. Among others, of similar or even more extraordinary height, may be briefly referred to those of Theutobochus, king of the Teutoni, found on the 11th of June, 1613, twenty-five and a-half feet high; of a giant discovered in 1548 near Palermo, thirty feet; of another in 1550, in the same vicinity, thirty-three feet; of two others in Athens, thirty-three and thirty-six feet; and of one at Totu, in Bohemia, in 785, whose shin-bones alone measured twenty-six feet; by which it may be supposed that the entire body exceeded 110 feet. I have yet to mention another instance derived from the earlier ages of antiquity, as recorded by Homer, which throws all these later 'great Zanzummins,' or 'giganticall Anakims' (as old Burton would call them), into the shade. What thinkest thou, brother chevalier, of Otus and Ephialtes, the sons of Neptune, who were nine acres long? What, I trow, was King Askew's nine feet to this? But I have interrupted you for a longer space than I intended. *Parfay!* the interest

of the subject must plead my excuse," and he laughed a merry laugh.

"It would be tedious," continued the Chevalier, not replying to the satire implied in the above remarks, "to enumerate instances wherein skeletons of nine and even eleven feet have been discovered in very ancient sites of sepulture (20). We may, perhaps, therefore, suppose that King Askew retired with his followers to the secret vaults of the castle, leaving the unfortunate Saxon prisoners, disguised as Danish nobles and soldiers, and wallowing in speechless intoxication, to be butchered by their own countrymen. During the monarch's short-intended concealment, some unsuspected emissary of Nyradur (like Pacolet, in the famous history of 'Valentine and Orson'), appears to have accomplished the surprise of a scarcely less fatal opiate than that from which the king and his court had so narrowly escaped. We will now consider the natural possibility of King Askew's existence till the present time."

"Ha ! o' my life," exclaimed the Antiquary, starting from his seat, "that were an argument to be discussed over a third flask. Softly, sir, there is strength of counsel in the glass. We have it on record that Epimenides, a Cretan poet and philosopher, in the sixth century before the Christian era slept for fifty-seven years, and that he lived 299 years—facts that go far to lessen the doubt that seems to involve the present story; since every school-

boy knows the trite axiom 'Well begun, is half done!' and every elder reader remembers the old French adage—'*Il n'y a que le premier pas qui coute!*' The first step is the only difficulty;—an adage that was well applied to the story of a certain Saint Piat, who, after his head was cut off, walked two entire leagues with it in his hand: and which proverbial *bon-mot* applied to good King Askew's case, may shew us that the chief difficulty lay in getting well through the first part (say fifty years,) of his long nap; and that, this being accomplished, the remaining eight hundred years of the term would indeed add little marvel to the character of the adventure. By the bye *(gaudeo referens)*, talking of that worthy Cretan, Epimenides, reminds me that, beneath a curious trap-dooor in yonder closet, secured by a Florentine lock of the fifteenth century, is a last remaining bottle of rich new (21) Muscadine of Crete—a present from mine honoured correspondent, Prince Angelino di Valsamachi; with whose valued works on the Grecian Antiquities you are probably well acquainted. In an ἀσκὸς (22) (excuse the pun) of this generous wine, we will drink to the restoration of Askew. *Corpo di Bacco!* its strength and flavour are such, that it might recall the ancient dwellers in the Pyramids from their marble sleep; while to the heart of warm vitality it imparts a glow of divine inspiration, like that produced by the nectar of the Gods. Crete, renowned of old for her hundred cities,—the spot where Jupiter himself was nurtured,

may now glory in the noble tribute of her vines—the fit, immortal drink of gods and heroes!"

So saying, the Antiquary caught up a small Etruscan lamp made of yellowish red *terra-cotta*, and in figure resembling a swan with a cupid on its back, and which previously stood, ready lighted, on a magnificent bracket-pedestal of Corinthian bronze supporting an alabaster *statuette* of Hebe; and, as he glided away, with an air of mysterious solemnity, attired in his antique gown, cap, and slippers, he looked (but that he was clothed in black, instead of white), like one of the Persian *Magi*, arisen from his long slumbers amid the hoary tombs of Bactra (23).

CHAPTER VI.

NEW READINGS IN PHILOSOPHY.

NATH. I pray God for you, sir: your reasons have been sharp and sententious; learned without opinion, and *strange without heresy.*

Love's Labour Lost, Act v. sc. 1.

ARM. Now, by the salt wave of the Mediterraneum, a sweet touch, a quick venew of wit: snip, snap, quick and home; it rejoiceth my intellect: true wit.

Ibidem.

IN a few moments after his exit, Sir Ernest Oldworthy returned, bearing in solemn triumph the mysterious elixir, whose praises he had so emphatically pronounced. The bottle containing this precious cordial was of an elliptical form, and distinguished by a neck of grotesque length; while the arms of Valsamachi, adorned and entoured with the numerous chivalric badges appertaining to them, were moulded, in high relief, on the side, and again appeared on the green-and-gold wax seal that protected the contents. The exhilarated host then reached, from an old, curiously-carved buffet, two large embossed drinking cups of ancient Sidon, in Phœnicia, made from the famous

glassy sand of the river Belus; and, while he proceeded to draw the cork, he indulged himself in an invocative strophe to the 'jolly god'—

"Come, thou monarch of the vine,
Plumpy Bacchus, with pink eyne!
In thy vats our cares be drowned,
With thy grapes our hairs be crowned:
Cup us till the world go round;
Cup us till the world go round!"

Presenting the maiden bumper to his learned guest, and pouring out a second for himself, he repeated the welcome of Angantyr to Frithiof:—

"Now flagons from Sicilia's store
Their treasured nectar gave;
Not Etna's fire could sparkle more,
More froth Charybdis' wave.

'Come, pledge the memory of my friend,
Be welcome pledged, he said,
And let the brimming goblet blend
The living and the dead!"

"No, not 'the dead,'," he continued, "but one who, living eight hundred and fifty years ago, might naturally have been accounted such! Mark you this wine, most welcome guest? Gods! what a sweet, colliquative perfume! How intensely vivid, too, the rubeous glow that tinctures the admiring crystal! Come, distinguished sir, I drink to the restoration of the ancient 'high-battled' monarch of Hleidra; the 'kingly Askew, famous among peoples;' the 'Burgonet of Men;' the 'Model of Warriors;' the 'Flos Heroum;'

the 'Mirabilis Mars of Northern Chivalry;' the 'Atlas;' the 'Earthly Jove!'—

'—Strike the vessels, ho!
Here is to Cæsar.'
'Cæsar? Why, he's the Jupiter of men!'

We will couple with the toast the honoured ties of Northern Chivalry, to which, as knights of the 'Amaranth,' our feelings may well respond with sympathetic fervour."

The Chevalier Dánskiölldr replied by extending his hand, with a smile of cordial and engaging warmth; and the Antiquary returned its lengthened pressure with an emotion not less fraternal.

The effect of the Cretan grape seemed no less inspiring than the sanguine predication of the worthy host had announced; and, by the time that a few other toasts had done honour to its rare virtues, the mood of our adventurous *confrères* was opportunely assimilated to the demand of elevated courage implied in the execution of their approaching enterprise.

"To the fair-haired daughters of the North, brother," exclaimed the Antiquary, with chivalric enthusiasm; a sentiment that was duly acknowledged by his complimented guest, who then took advantage of a pause in the dialogue, to revert to his observations on the natural survival of the entranced monarch.

"It may be considered," he remarked, "that the possibility of King Askew's existence till the present moment may be pleaded on natural grounds."

"O excellent!" interrupted the Antiquary, "I love long life better than figs."

"In the earlier ages of the world," pursued the Professor, not seeming to notice the dry tone in which Sir Ernest uttered the pithy exclamation that had presented itself from 'Antony and Cleopatra;' "in the early days of the world, the lives of men were extended to a very considerable period,—for instance, Adam lived 930 years; Seth, 912; Enos, 905; Cainan, 910; Mahalaleel, 895; Jared, 962; Enoch, 365;—this last patriarch is recorded not to have met the ordinary fiat of nature, but to have been divinely translated to heaven; and Methuselah, with whose name we will close the list of examples, 969 years. Such were the lives of men in early times; and I never read of any special law by which nature limited their individual duration; although she chose to reduce the standard or ordinary measure of longevity. Exceptions to this general course of abbreviation doubtless existed in every age and country, and probably to an extent of which we have no adequate idea; but, however this may be, we have, in Danemarck, various examples of longevity extending to the respective periods of 169, 202, 214, and even 299 years. If King Askew, then, by the peculiar strength of his constitution (and we have direct testimony of the prodigious stature and vigour which distinguished him from others), were formed to exist to the age of 299 years—the maximum instance of longevity in later

times—may not the fact of his having been cast into a deep sleep, whereby the active exercise of his faculties was suspended, and the natural waste of vital energy thus decreased, be admitted as a means of extending the date of his existence to a period approaching more nearly to the maximum term of the patriarchal lives, without violating the bounds of possibility?"

"No doubt of it, my friend," said Sir Ernest; "and if he was never shaved during his long nap, his beard, methinks, would be as long as that of Ogier the Dane, which grew through a stone table, while he slept with his steel-clad warriors in a vault of Cronenberg Castle, under the influence of a similar spell. When he raised his head, on the dissolution of the charm, the table was burst in twain. When I was at Cronenberg, I bought, for a sum I dare scarcely choose to recollect, a very curious suit of chain mail, which had for ages been reputed to have belonged to him."

"The constitution of the Britons was so strong," pursued the Chevalier, not noticing the understratum of cool, satirical humour that lurked beneath the light facetious tone of Sir Ernest's remark, but feeling impatient only of the repeated interruption; "the constitution of the Britons was so strong, that, according to Plutarch (24), they would not begin to grow old till a hundred and twenty; the natural heat of the body, as he conceives, being preserved by the coolness of the country. And it is recorded by your own country-

man Ingulf, a writer of great authority, that, in the time of the Saxons, three contemporary monks of Croyland died, respectively, in the 168th, 142nd, and 115th year of their age (25). Now, the air of Croyland would naturally be rendered cooler by the moist, fenny, and waterish nature of the soil in that part of Lincolnshire, thus seeming to afford some confirmation of Plutarch's opinion. We may perhaps, therefore, suppose, that the moist, cool vapours abounding in the subterranean chambers, which form the alleged dwelling-place of King Askew, may have had some share in the extended preservation of his life."

"By the bare scalp of Robin Hood's fat friar," exclaimed the Antiquary, "this hath some seeming; and certes, it would be idle indeed to allow any human testimony to weigh against the evidences that have been adduced in support of the fact of his survival. Mr. Professor, the wine is with you. We have yet to drink the health of my illustrious friend, 'Prince Valsamachi.'

'Fill till the cup be hid.'"

A glittering bumper crowned the toast; and the Chevalier proceeded with increased animation.

"Then, as respects the mighty operation of the soporific draught, who shall question the occult properties of herbs, or say that none ever existed, which possessed the extraordinary power of conferring a death-like trance of centuries' duration? Is it not, indeed, probable, that if such were formerly disco-

vered, they would be regarded by mankind as an evil of such magnitude, as to call for general extirpation; and thus, like the dragon of the animal creation, (whose existence, I confess, I never took upon myself to doubt,) they would at length disappear from the face of the earth? You might as well say that bears, wolves, and wild boars never existed in England, because they are not to be found there now, as deny the fact that these noxious herbs formerly existed (with their still mightier powers of evil), because, forsooth, they are not to be met with at the present day. Orus Apollo writes in his 'Hieroglyphics,' that the serpent purgeth his brain and cleareth his sight with a certain herb, the properties and virtues whereof are known only to himself; while it is remarked by Plutarch, Pliny, Theophrastus, Albertus Magnus, and others, that the same animal knoweth how to renew his old skin, becoming young again, and conserving himself long in life, by eating a certain herb. And I need not tell one of your extensive and various knowledge and erudition, that this singular property of the serpent to make himself become young again, was the origin of the fable that the rod and caduceus of Mercury had the virtue to cure diseases—nay, even to reseat the soul in the body, being divided from it. Your deep antiquarian reading must have made it known to you, that the Druids of Gaul and Britain held the same ideas, and indeed professed a knowledge of the mode of extracting such power from

the herb verveine, as respects the cure of diseases. May not then the soporific draught, under whose prolonged influence the life of Askew has been preserved in a state of alleged trance, have been compounded of this strange herb, with other mysteriously-prepared and similarly-efficacious ingredients? Now the natures of the serpent and the dragon are similar—by some writers they have been held to be identical. I ask then whether the blood of the dragon, which has been suggested to us as the means of recovering the Pagan King from his long and death-like sleep, may not be supposed to derive its anti-somnific virtue from the herb which ancient writers have reported to have been eaten by that class of creatures, for the purpose of purging their brain? The mode of administering the appointed restorative, namely, by instillation into the ear, seems to point closely to a particular action on the brain; through the extreme susceptibility of the *membrana tympani*, and of the nerves, blood-vessels, and absorbents connected with the aural cavity, and communicating with the general nervous system; and I doubt not, worthy sir, that your opinion on these points will further tend to elucidate my own."

"By the faith of a knight," exclaimed Sir Ernest, with a gleeful smile, and a shrewd appeal to his old-fashioned snuff-box, as if for the purpose of purging his own brain through the less dignified but more obvious medium of the nasal organ. "By the souls of my ancestry, you have drawn your good bow to the

ear, and let fly a straight and fair arrow at the mark. You have hit the clout, neighbour! And I flatter myself, that as soon as we shall have given to the worthy old warrior of the iron days of Hreopandún, a dose of seven drops of the mystical liquid, he will, in compliance with the doctrine which you have so learnedly expounded for my edification, cast off his skin for the benefit of my museum; where it shall be the pride of my descendants, to the fortieth generation, to preserve it, as an evidence of their great ancestor's most potential and memorable achievement. But, worthy philosopher, on one particular I need instruction. If the tincture be only applied to the ear of the king, how can his followers participate in the resuscitation of their master?"

"I had thought of such an objection ere you advanced it," replied the Chevalier, "and, in regard thereto, would suggest that the laws of sympathy are little understood, and may account for the apparent inconsistency of the theory in question;—a theory which Sir Kenelm Digby's well-known and unanswerable experiments, in the cure of diseases, through the unconscious operation of this feeling, would go far to explain and support. Sir Ernest Oldworthy, permit me to give as a toast,—'The Ladies of England, whose beauty is that of a rose in the wreath of the nations!'"

Sir Ernest bowed his smiling thanks, and soon afterwards proposed a bumper to the united healths of

the Kings of England, Denmark, and Sweden, to be drunk standing, and with klinking or hob-knobbing of glasses. After these becoming manifestations of devotion to *le beau sexe*, and of courteous homage to royalty, the Chevalier Dánskiölldr again proceeded.

"That dragons formerly existed is vouched by the well-authenticated report of many writers, who have contributed their attestations to the fact, that, in the great library of the Emperor Constantine, at Byzantium, were preserved the entrails of a monster of this kind, in length 120 feet, on which were admirably written, in letters of gold, the various books of the Iliad."

"'—Gods and goddesses,
All the whole synod of them!'"

exclaimed Sir Ernest, in a ludicrous tone of affected wonder.

"We have already considered," observed the Chevalier, "the efficacy which has been said to reside in the blood of these animals, in opposing the baleful effects of soporific plants. And under this head I would further remark, that, were we disposed to cast aside our belief in any particular property derived from the botanical source alluded to, there seems to be nothing very extraordinary in the supposititious power thus ascribed. The acrid humour possessed by the blood of this monster, falling upon the membranes of the ear, might occasion an inflammatory affection of the nerves with which they are so well stored, and thus prove a most powerful agent for the removal of

lethargic insensibility. Indeed, any thing of a stimulating nature that insinuates itself into the cavity of the organ alluded to, particularly if the more internal parts be affected, will readily excite great pain and feverishness, and not unfrequently delirium. A small insect introduced, instead of the awful charm in question, might have been equally instrumental; but then, *pardieu*, the *romanesque* would have been lost—the *pittoresque* exploded. And yet, my dear sir, the '*nisi dignus vindice nodus*' is a rule not to be forgotten, even in melo-drame; and its breach, if philosophically considered in the present instance, is most ludicrously apparent, where a DRAGON is called in to do the work of a *flea*!!"

"'Mass, and well said, brother knight," observed Sir Ernest, chuckling with concealed glee at the solemnly-critical expression of his companion's features; "and yet I cannot but cling to the magical influence of the liquid; and the more so, since I witness how potent and subtile is that curious elixir which I am now so luxuriously imbibing, and which so well justifies the claim of Candia to be still esteemed, as of old, the 'Island of the Blessed.' Thy arguments are plausible and witty enough; but, supposing that we admit thy interpretation as the more correct, what then becomes of the mysterious vision, the record of the 'Giant's Staff,' and the other supernatural additamenta of our living *epopée*?—Marry, guep with a wannion!" he exclaimed, with a slight air of pique;

"what would thine old acquaintance, the Skald, say to our disowning the enchanted condition of the 'charnelled prince?'"

"So far as we have proceeded to consider the question," replied the Professor, "its solution has been determined by the evidence of natural causes; and I am still of opinion that this problem of ours may be fully explained without recourse to the influence of magical agency. It remains to be observed, in reference to the mode in which we have been called upon to undertake this great task, that there are numerous well-established records in all nations, of dreams and other revelations of an extraordinary nature, which were instrumental in the detection of murder and other crimes; and why should not such peculiar disclosures be manifested, as in the present instance, to save the lives of men, rather than to point out the circumstances of their death or other injury? Lastly, we have but to refer the power of such an interposition to Providence, which our venerable friend, the Skald, claims for his Scandinavian deity, Odin (whom he himself would call Allfader, or Universal Parent); and, allowing that there does remain something for which we cannot well account in the Pagan imagery so curiously exemplified in the revelation before us, we have a clear and satisfying exposition of the natural features of our adventure, and a sufficient elucidation of the principle which doubtless determined the mode of discovery."

"*Et sic demonstratur, quod erat demonstrandum,*" said Sir Ernest Oldworthy; "thy explanation, worthy kinsman, is good; and I now confess, that the doubts which I hitherto entertained are much relieved by thy very able and circumstantially-directed criticism. By cock and pye!" he cried, laughing gaily, and emptying into his companion's glass the last crimson bumper; "henceforth I will believe, with Anaxagoras, that snow is black. The wonders of Olaus Magnus (26) are from this time credible enough; and my faith shall be likened unto *Sebastian's* in the 'Tempest'—

> 'Now I will believe
> That there are unicorns; that, in Arabia,
> There is one tree, the phœnix throne, one phœnix
> At this hour reigning there.'

But I confess," continued he, with a significantly smiling air, "that I incline to refer the matter forthwith to the Royal Sleeper himself:—

> 'Meantime, let *wonder* be familiar,'

as the *Friar* says in 'Much ado about Nothing;' and let us, with *Worcester*, in 'King Henry the Fourth:'—

> '—keep aloof from strict arbitrement
> And stop all sight holes, every loop, from whence
> The eye of *reason* may pry in upon us.'

The Hill of Askew," he added, assuming a look of determined gravity, "is situate within a quarter of a mile from the extremity of the village; and distant hence a 'scant mile.' It happens, fortunately for our

purpose, that the implements necessary for laying open the approach to the secret chambers, are concealed near the spot; as I had arranged with the right worshipful my most especial good friend and neighbour, Sir Thomas Gresley, to explore (God willing), the contents of the larger barrow on the summit, at an early hour to-morrow."

"Say, good my friend," joyfully interrogated the philosopher, while he curled up the points of his moustache, and thrust within his sleeve the ruffles at his wrist, as if preparing for action, "shall we proceed thither at once, and thereby relieve our minds from their present anxiety?"

"My heart is with your liking," was the ready reply; and, suiting the action to the speech, the Antiquary threw off his gown and slippers with an air of comic bravery, and proceeded to endue his outdoor apparel. Then taking forth from his buffet a large-sized tazza, or vase, made of the well-known red pottery, called "Samian ware," highly polished and decorated with elaborate ornaments in relief, representing garlands of vine leaves and other plants, and having a rim of sardonyx,—he hurriedly tossed up a bowl of punch, in order, as he observed, to fence out the cold; and, having exhilarated the spirits of his guest, as well as his own, therewith, he piled additional fuel in the grate, to ensure a comfortable reception on their return. Sir Ernest next selected from a neighbouring hall-case, certain stout upper-coats, over-alls,

and mud boots, in which he and his companion speedily attired themselves, as a further defiance to the weather. Then, taking each a small lantern provided with a powerful reflector, they traversed the pavement of the corridor and hall with cautious steps, lest the very stones should "prate of their whereabout;" and, at the next moment, stepped forth dauntlessly into the gloom and inclemency of a December night-storm.

"*Dieu merci!*" exclaimed the Chevalier Dánskiölldr, "what a night is this!"

"*Coragio, camerado mio,*" replied Sir Ernest Oldworthy; "let us call to mind the remark of the *Shepherd*, in Virgil—

'*Cantantes* licet usque (minus via lædet) eamus!'"

and, setting a good heart on the matter, he, by way of example, proceeded to chant the remnant of some old monkish song about the weather; a few lines of which ran thus—

'Ecce nocturno tempore,
Orto brumali turbine,
Quatiens terram tempestas
Turbabat atque vastitas;
Cum fracti venti fædere
Baccharentur in æthere,
Et, rupto retinaculo,
Desævirent in seculo.'

which has been thus translated—

'Lo! in the night, when the wintry whirlwind has arisen, the tempest shakes the earth, and desolation

terrifies; when the bursting winds rage in the air, and, having broken through their confinement, madden on the earth.'

And here, probably, the worthy reader, if, indeed, he have accompanied our gallant knights and learned academicians thus far, will be inclined to exclaim, with *Menenius Agrippa*, to *Sicinius Velutus* and *Junius Brutus*, in "Coriolanus,"—"Good e'en to your worships; more of your conversation would infect my brain: I will be bold to take my leave of you." But we cannot allow our old friend and his new acquaintance to proceed on their extraordinary enterprise, without addressing a hearty prayer for their success, and which we may also put forth in the words of the same play—

'The gods assist you,
And keep your honours safe.'

And so we commend them to their fortunes.—"*Floreat Amarantus!*"*

* In endeavouring to communicate, as entire as possible, the same impressions which the particulars of the following narrative may suggest to my own mind, as they arise in successive review, I confess that I shall not proceed without considerable doubt of success, although I do not altogether despair of the issue. There are few things, I believe, in writing more difficult than '*s'emparer de l'imagination*,' as a late author observes, 'to make ourselves masters of the reader's imagination, to carry it along with us through every scene, and make it in a manner congenial with our own; every prospect opening upon him with the same light, and arising in the same colours, and at the same instant too, as upon us; for where descriptions fail in this, the pleasure of reading them must be very trivial.'

NOTES TO PART VII.

(1.) "The Asæ met in Ida Valle,
And talked of the world's great calamities:
And of the ancient runæ of Fimbultyr."

The Völuspá.

(2.) "Be silent, I pray, all holy creatures!
Greater or small! sons of Heimdallar!
I will tell of the devices of Valfödur:
The ancient discourses of men; the earliest I know."

The Völuspá.

(3.) "Then comes
The beautiful son of Hlodynia.
The son of Odin combated the wolf.
He slew in wrath the serpent Midgard.
Men state the prop of the world."

The Völuspá.

(4.) "The offspring of Fiorgunar
Stepped nine steps.
Weakened by the black and hungry snake,
The sun darkens;
The earth is immerged in the sea;
The serene stars are withdrawn from heaven:
Fire rages in the ancient world:
The lofty colour reaches to heaven itself."

The Völuspá.

(5.) "The sons of Mimur will sport;
But the bosom of the earth will burn.
Hear the sound of the mystic horn,
Heimdallur will blow on high
The elevated horn.
Odin will speak by the head of Mimur.

The Völuspá.

See notes to Part VIII. No. 55.

(6.) Pronounced *Yule.*

(7.) Copenhagen.

(8.) Miles. One Danish mile is nearly equal to four English ones. It consists of 7233 yards.

(9.) Ashen tablets were much employed in the earlier ages of the north for the purpose of writing. Those of beech were also used. Wormius is of opinion that pieces of wood cut from the latter tree were the ancient northern books.

(10.) These characters were used for purposes connected with the pretended art of magic; and their efficacy in this respect is inculcated by Odin in several passages of the fragmentary poetry collected by Sæmund. Saxo Grammaticus speaks of magical songs carved on wooden tablets.—WHEATON. That similar inscriptions were also painted, as described in the text, we learn from the following lines of Venantius Fortunatus, a Latin poet of the sixth century, who likewise records the use of ash wood as a material for writing.

"Barbara fraxineis pingatur Runa tabellis,
Quodque papyrus ait, virgula plana valet."

(11.) Pontiff.

(12.) A celebrated idol.—See Notes to Part VIII. No. 55,

where I have stated, at some length, my reasons for believing that the worship of this little understood object of the Saxon idolatry was identical with that of Odin. The superstitious rites of the Danes nearly accorded with those of the Anglo-Saxons, the result of their common descent from the ancient Germans.

(13.) The Dysæ, which resemble the Parcæ of the Romans, were three inferior goddesses, the daughters and messengers of the great Odin. One of the duties assigned to them, was to convey the souls of such as died in battle to his palace called Valhall, or the "Hall of Slaughter."

"The Dysæ now my steps attend,
Who, sent by Odin from his hall,
Call, and bless me with their call."

(14.) On the night of this festival the Danes did not retire to rest, as we find in the following passage from Turner's "Hist. A. S.," which, although referring to the Pagan Saxons, is equally applicable to the other worshippers of Odin and the northern deities. "They began their year from the day which we celebrate as Christmas Day, and that night they called Moedrenech, or 'mother night,' from the worship or ceremonies, as Bede imagines, in which, unsleeping, they spent it." Mr. Turner elsewhere remarks, that "their celebrated festival of Jule, or Yule, which occurred at the period of our Christmas, was a combination of religion and conviviality." Knowing what we do of the habits of these northern warriors, it seems far more probable that, after the worship or ceremonies of the day, old "mother night," as they termed her, should witness libations of a more exhilarating nature than those expended on the sacrifices. Under the influence of such an impression, I have ventured to seat King Askew and his court at the mead-board, leaving them to take the fullest advantage of their position. It should, however, be remembered, that in the code of Pagan morals, intoxication was not considered a debasing habit, but rather the exercise of an honourable privilege. Indeed, the chief enjoyment of the gods

themselves was believed to consist in the unlimited indulgence of this species of excess.

(15.) This was a customary part of the magic *formulæ* of the Scandinavians.

> " Strange verse he sung, the slain enchanting,
> Traced mystic letters, northward looking."
>
> *Vegtams-quida.*

(16.) Faul and Neccus have been already noticed. (See Notes to Part VI. Nos, 55 and 56, Vol. ii.) Hama, Flinnus, and Siba, have left no other record than their names. Zernebogus is represented as " the black, malevolent, and ill-omened deity," and Flynt is described by Verstigan as a being worshipped under the image of death, apparelled in a sheet, bearing a torch, and placed on a great flint stone.

(17.) I have seen ancient documents, wherein the date was thus specified in a different language. In the present instance, the eastern origin of Odin suggests the introduction of this mode of certifying the time.

(18.) The Gregorian mode of computation was established in this country by an act of the legislature in 1752; twenty-six years after the period in which our worthy friend, Sir Ernest Oldworthy, made this proper distinction of dates, in the calculation of the exact time of the determination of the spell. In the same year, also, it was enacted, that the legal year, which had before this time commenced on the 25th of March, should begin on the 1st of January.

(19.) John of Salisbury, a moralist, who died in 1128, was a man of such learning, that when his adherence to the turbulent Becket forced him into exile, his merit gained him the see of Chartres in France.

(20.) A remarkable pile of dry bones has been preserved in

this town, [Hithe, in Kent,] and kept in a vault under the church, consisting of several thousand heads, arms, legs, thigh-bones, &c., some of which are very gigantic, and appear by an inscription to be the remains of the Danes and Britons killed in a battle near this place before the Norman conquest. "A New Display of the Beauties of England," vol. i. p. 215.

About five miles from Dorking is the village of Wotton [Surrey]; and in opening the ground in the churchyard here, to enlarge the vault of the Evelyn family, in the reign of King Charles II., a human skeleton was found, which measured nine feet three inches in length.—*Ibidem*, vol. i. p. 234.

At Doward-hill, in the parish of Whitchurch, Herefordshire, some men who were digging found a cavity which seemed to have been arched over, and in it a human skeleton, which appeared to have been more than double the stature of the tallest man now known.—*Ibidem*, vol. ii., p. 265.

In 1031, Canute penetrated Scotland and subjugated Malcolm, and two other kings. On the gigantic bones said to be found, 1520, in the place of the conflicts between Canute and Malcolm, they who think it worth while may read Stephanius's note on Saxo, p. 27.—TURNER.

A barrow was opened near Chelmorton, in Derbyshire, in 1782. Those who saw the bones thought that they were uncommonly large; and it was imagined that the persons to whom they belonged must have been, when alive, at least seven feet high.—PILKINGTON'S "View of Derbyshire," vol. ii. p. 426.

In digging the foundation of buildings in the neighbourhood of the King's Head Inn, Derby, the site of the ancient priory of St. James, originally a small cell or chapel founded in the Saxon era, a stone coffin was discovered several years ago containing a body of prodigious size. — GLOVER'S "Derbyshire," vol. ii. p. 457.

Among the Danish chieftains of the eighth century was one Hrolf, or Rolla, who was called the Ganger, or Walker. From his height and weight, he was unable to use a horse, and therefore compelled to walk or go on foot, whence his *sobriquet*.

In the life of Athelstan, we read of Guy Earl of Warwick

returning from the Holy Land in the habit of a pilgrim, at a time when Athelstan was in great distress for a champion to fight Colebrand, a monstrous Danish giant, who in behalf of the Danes had challenged any person the king should bring into the field. Guy accepted this challenge, fought the giant near Winchester, and killed him, and the Danes yielded the victory; while Guy privately retired to a hermit's cell near Warwick, and there ended his days. This romantic story is mentioned by Brompton and other learned writers.

(21.) That the Cretan wines lose their flavour by being kept for any considerable space, appears from the following passage in the "*Platonick Lovers*" of Davenant :—

"O Theander ! the sweetnesse of thy soule
Is sowr'd, like Cretan wines that are too excellent
To last."

(22.) A bottle. In a stricter sense, applied to a leathern bottle, or skin sewed up to hold liquor, whence ἀσκώλεα, the festival of Bacchus, in which they jumped upon swelled and oiled bladders, or leathern bottles.

(23.) The capital of Bactriana, of which Zoroaster, founder of the *Magi*, was king.

(24.) In his "*De Placitis Philosophiæ.*"

(25.) "When the famous Turketul, who had been chancellor of England, and one of the greatest warriors and statesmen of his time, retired from the world, and became abbot of Croyland, he found three very aged monks in that monastery, to whom he paid particular attention. The eldest of these monks died in 973, after he had completed the 168th year of his age : the second died the same year at the age of 142 ; and the third died in 975, in the 115th year of his age."

(26.) In his "*Historia De Gentibus Septentrionalibus.*" *Romæ*,

1555. It has been said of the author, that "he crammed into his book all the marvellous things he could hear, or see, without caring one jot about their truth." A copy of this curious work, in old wooden binding, might doubtless have been observed on one of the folio shelves of our learned friend, Sir Ernest Oldworthy, whose collection, it may be supposed, was particularly rich in Northern histories. It is strange to find so sensible and ingenious a writer as Burton, the author of the "*Description of Leicestershire*," referring with implicit credence to the improbable statements of Olaus Magnus. But the spirit of the age in which he wrote may be allowed to extenuate the charge of such a weakness.

PART VIII.

THE "DOOM OF KING ASKEW;"

OR,

THE CASTLE OF THE ENCHANTED SLEEPERS.

A TALE OF MODERN WONDER.

Entranced beneath yon wood-crowned steep,
Now *Askew* and his warriors sleep
Their charmed slumbers long and deep,
In magic thraldom bound.

Anon.

FEL. Since the days of Don Quixote to this present seven o'clock in the evening, sure never was a better subject for romance.

The Perplexities, Act i. sc. 2.

GUZ. A pretty errand at this time of night!

The Perplexities, Act iv. sc. 1.

HEN. My impatience to unfold this riddle burns me up.

Ibidem, Act iv, sc. 2.

ARCH. A fair challenge by this light; this is a pretty fair opening of an adventure; but we are knights-errants, and so Fortune be our guide.

Beaux' Stratagem, Act i. sc. 1.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ANTIQUARY'S MIDNIGHT ADVENTURE.

BOLING. Deep night, dark night, the silent of the night,
The time of night when Troy was set on fire;
The time when screech-owls cry, and ban dogs howl,
And spirits walk, and ghosts break up their graves;
That time *best fits the work we have in hand.*
King Henry VI. Part ii. Act i. sc. 4.

IT was a night of December's surliest mood. Loud and fitful gusts of wind rushed with terrific impetuosity, through the vacant streets of the village; and the straining boughs of the wayside trees roared and crashed, with startling violence, as our adventurers passed along. Heavy drops of rain fell at intervals, announcing the approach of a renewed torrent; while the flickering rays of the lanterns were dimly reflected in the wide pools of stagnant water, that had accumulated in the hollows of the road; and through which the discomforted pair were repeatedly compelled to wade. In short, a more dreary converse to the snug, warm, and well-lighted chamber which

they had rashly adandoned in pursuit of an adventure that promised no very alluring results at the best; and whose less fortunate issue might be supposed to attach some considerable degree of danger, could not ordinarily be conceived. Nevertheless, they prosecuted their path, with determined energy, in the direction of the neighbouring hill, forming the *locale* of their wild and marvellous purpose of exploration. The extraordinary nature of the enterprise in which they had embarked, and which necessarily gave rise, in either mind, to a train of exciting ideas, kept them for some time silent; but, as they at length quitted the public-road, along which their route had hitherto lain, and entered an extensive tract of grazing-land, through which the foot-path leading to the summit of the hill extended, and which had been rendered almost impassable by long and heavy rains; they again renewed their counsel as to the most expedient method of conducting their strange and mysterious proceedings—taking into consideration every diversity of incident, that might occur to embarrass their various proposed operations. Having weighed and adjusted every precautionary measure, they diverged into more general remark on the nature and consequences of their adventure. And herein they did what many wise men had done before—namely, considered that portion of the subject in the last instance, which required the earliest and deepest attention; and dwelt largely upon matters of slight or but secondary importance,

which would have incidentally resolved themselves into the main question.

"I have been thinking, brother Dánskiölldr," observed the Antiquary, "that his Majesty's lieges, my good neighbours, will have little to thank us for, in delivering a strong band of Danish robbers—desperate, wild, fierce, and indomitable in their habits,—from the fetters that at present secure them from mischief. And I leave it to thy good discretion, *mi amicissime*, to consider whether the savage sleepers themselves may be aught obliged to those who exchange their state of profound forgetfulness, or dreamy quiet, for a world in which fortune may assign them no nobler occupation than that of the freebooter. The halls of Hleidra have long since passed away, and were it not better, look ye, that the heir of a lost realm should be also blended with the shadows of the 'things that were?' Mind you not that Askew is sitting upon his throne, or chair of state, in all the magnificence of his robes of ceremony, as if ruling the destinies of half the world, and unconscious of the dreary narrowness of his dungeon-tomb? Were it not a kind of sacrilege to disturb him—yea, virtually and in effect, as great a violation of the sanctity of the sepulchral rite, as that which was committed by Otho the Third, when he discrowned the skeleton of Charlemagne, as it sat upon its royal seat, sceptre in hand, in the Chappelle of Aix? By the bow and clemency of Robin Hood, my conscience

gives warning, albeit at a late hour, that we have embraced a rash and misguided purpose!—But what sayest thou, most worthy philosopher ?"

"I will answer your interrogatory with another," replied the Chevalier, gravely; "is it right to abstain from doing good, lest a partial evil should arise from it? Now, it must needs be owned, that the act which seeks to restore to life and vigour those who, by a peculiar affliction, have been long deprived of the free exercise of their mental and bodily functions, must in itself be good. I ask not, then, the consequences; let them fall out as heaven pleases! What, indeed, says your great thinker, Locke? 'Men must pursue things which are just in the Present, and leave the Future to the Divine Providence.' It is my expectation, however, that immediate death will follow the recovery of these ancient inhabitants of the earth—that soon after the renewed exercise of their long-disused faculties, a dissolution of the vital principle will take place. The sudden effect of the atmospheric agency will doubtless prove too great for the different functions to bear; the violent stimulus must, I conceive, prejudicially affect the general organism; primarily causing the entire prostration and wreck of the nervous system, and indirectly communicating the same hostile influence to the lungs, producing congestion of the latter. Thus, may we see exemplified a somewhat similar fate to that of the lizards, bats, leeches, toads, frogs, worms, grubs, caterpillars, cray-fish, and other creatures, that

have existed, for centuries,—yes, probably from the period of the Deluge,—in a state of death-like torpidity, in the centre of a block of stone, coal, or marble; and which, on discovery, have expired, after a few unsuccessful efforts to inhale the energising influence of those powers that recalled their animation" (1).

"Such an issue," observed the Antiquary, "would remind us more especially of the discovery of the 'Seven Sleepèrs,' one of the most romantic of the legends of the Christian church. They related their story, bestowed their benediction, and at the same instant peaceably expired."

"Should such a result attend the restoration of the Pagan chief and his followers," resumed Dr. Dánskiölldr, "we shall still have achieved the high object of rescuing them from a doom which excludes the common privileges of humanity; and they will at least be united, in the spirit, to the kindred of their ancestor, Odin. To the 'wave-built throne of Hleidra,' as suggested by the Skald, the 'charnelled prince' will doubtless assert his pretensions, should he survive; and thus your apprehensions of injury to the lieges of your King may be abandoned. Doubt not that his coffers will be too well filled to allow him to stoop to low game, or to plunder otherwise than royally. To confess a truth," he added, in a less serious tone, and with a smile of peculiar meaning, "I suspect that the 'sharp shield-warrior' laid up a plentiful supply at the Sack of Hreopandún; nor failed to increase it, from

time to time, in his ravages through the surrounding country. 'Aurum in ærario est,' as Cicero says, 'there is gold in the treasury.' To this accumulation, as well as to the more ancient and, doubtless, costlier stores of the Roman fortress, we are the presumptive heirs; and I may give you joy, Sir Ernest, on the enrichment of your cabinet with heaps of curious coins—Roman—British—Saxon—Danish; ay, and ten to one, coins of half the other countries of Europe besides; as well as on the repletion of your *salle d'armes* with golden torques and helmets of silver, and with swords, ategars, and shields, of rarest curiosity; while I congratulate myself on the timely accommodation of a few hundred pounds of weighed gold and silver (2), to aid my long continued researches after the 'Grand Arcanum!'" (3).

"Hey-day! spirits and fires!" exclaimed the Antiquary, "what—a Rosicrucian? ods-bread, I thought that the sect of dreaming visionaries had become extinct with Sir Kenelm Digby and the Duke of Buckingham. Why, man, from this confession of thine, I take it that thy Skald was but an *imago fumosa* of thy too credulous fancy—a jack-a-lantern rather than a genie! 'Zounds, I have half resolved to leave thee to its guidance, and be quit of this light-headed speculation, ere it lead to the intellectual quagmire of obtenebration and defunction, and make me '*ridiculum caput*' amongst the people!—'Adzooks, I had no more brains than a Grand Jury, when I con-

sented to bear a part in so dreamy a project. I may say with Davenant—'This will decline the reputation of my wit, till I be thought to have a less head than a Justice o' Peace.'"

"Nay," returned the Philosopher, in a friendly but reproachful tone, "you must needs take your share of the adventure. I may say to you, with the spectral Skald, 'Darest thou impeach the oracles of Fate? art thou stronger than Destiny?' Remember, that the mysterious being said, that, though unseen, he would still be beside us; and, by the long white robe of Solomon, methought, but a few instants since (though it must have been a mere fancy), that I caught a glimpse of his white, flowing drapery at a short distance from yon dark trees on the summit of the hill! By heaven," he continued, more impressively, "I have no wish to question the authority, or power, so providentially and wonderfully displayed!" He trembled as he spoke; and it must be confessed that, under the influence of the darkness, and of the solemn, dirge-like notes of the wind, Sir Ernest momentarily partook of his emotion. A dead silence followed. By-and-bye, however, a snatch of old poetry, or a few bars of one of Isaac Walton's "ketches," shewed that the Antiquary had recovered his wonted equanimity. The near crest of the hill now shewed itself, more distinctly relieved against the paler sky—its tall and sharply-outlined tuft of trees giving it an air of more commanding elevation.

As they reached, after protracted and painful toil, the wooded crown of the eminence, the moon, emerging for an instant or two from a mass of wild, tempestuous clouds, threw a pale and sickly glare over the dull and gloomy recesses into which they were about to penetrate. The distant clock of the village church tolled the hour of midnight with striking distinctness—its slowly-measured and deeply-uttered tones seeming like the warning voice of some guardian spirit, raised to dissuade them from an unhallowed purpose. Ere its last echoes died away, in the momentary silence of the storm, the moon again became obscured; and a hoarse and dismal chorus of winds that seemed congregating from the thirty-two points of the compass, and still rushing to that one mighty centre—the lofty height on which our modern knights-errant stood, swept with fierce and giant force—their varied intonation resembling the denunciatory cries of a host of infernal foes. A feeling of added anxiety mingled with the increasing darkness of the night; while the rain, which now commenced falling with stealthily-acquired rapidity, deepened the sense of external discomfort under which they laboured. Still, however, the exciting character of their undertaking afforded to the mind of the sanguine companion of the Antiquary a stimulant to exertion; and, having now entered the sylvan scene of their inquiry, he proceeded to search for the spot pointed out by the Runic tablet, as the site of the secret entrance to the subterranean edifice. Sir Ernest

somewhat listlessly, observed, rather than aided his associate's investigation. The exuberant growth of an underwood of hazels and briers, rendered the search a task of considerable difficulty. After some lengthened scrutiny, however, the Chevalier ascertained the remarkable fact, that, amongst the multitude of oaks, elms, sycamores, Scottish and silver firs, white birches, and dwarf beeches, promiscuously assembled together, there *was* a solitary tree of the description specified in the record. Notwithstanding this propitious circumstance, Sir Ernest failed to catch the encouraging influence which it was calculated to afford, or to share in the excited expectations of his enthusiastic colleague. A deepening regret that he had incurred so laborious an imposition of toil as that which now awaited him, added to a newly-strengthened conviction that the sequel of the enterprise would prove the ridiculous fallacy of their design, pervaded the mind of the worthy Antiquary, as, shaking with cold, and enervated by the previous fatigues of the day, he began, with the assistance of his more eager companion, to clear away the wild brushwood, and break up the soil with the implements which were opportunely at hand.

Dr. Dánskiölldr might have reproached his spiritless ally, in the words of *Leontes*, in the "Winter's Tale:"—

> "You smell this business with a sense as cold
> As is a dead man's nose: but I do see't and feel't,
> As you feel doing thus."

CHAPTER VIII.

A LESSON IN SUBTERRANEAN GEOGRAPHY.

Cos. A little more of this mettal would *puzzle*
My geographie.

The Cruell Brother, Act iv. sc. 1.

It was a work demanding no ordinary exertion; the tangled growth of bramble-bushes, tall weeds, and creeping woodland plants, as well as the subsequent obstruction arising from the roots of the trees, that extended in wide ramifications below the surface, long opposed their impatient endeavours. An accompanying impediment to their labour was also presented by the nature of the strata upon which they were engaged, which consisted of calcareous gravel, forming a hard and almost impenetrable conglomerate, in which were occasionally found boulders of a considerable size. But still they resolutely and manfully continued their efforts; while the shrill moaning cry of the wind through the leafless birch-trees, or its yet harsher sound, when resisted by the foliage of the mingled firs, lent ever and anon, a sympathetic echo to Sir Ernest's internal vexation.

"By the iron crown of Charlemagne, whose circlet is formed of the veritable nails of the Cross, transmitted by St. Helena to Queen Theolinda," quoth he, pausing to take breath, after a more than ordinary putting forth of his vigour; "I question whether, Christian man as I am, my energies would support me in the holy purpose of rescuing the royal victim from the bonds of the devilish enchanter, an it were not for the golden bracelets and torques, the helmets of silver, the swords, ategars, and shields, of rarest curiosity, wherewith thou hast promised, worthy Philosopher, to enrich my arsenal: yea, I fear me that the better object would not suffice to give nerve to my attempts. I may say, with *Constantia*, in the 'She Gallants,' 'I declare for my part, I would have seen all mankind at the devil before I'd have taken so much pains for any one of 'em.'"

A tone of quiet sarcasm ran through this confession, which might serve to indicate that his expectations of a share in the royal treasure were not over sanguine. The pitiless pelting of a short discharge of hail-stones, succeeded by a deluge of rain, suspended for a few moments his companion's reply; while it rendered more severe and repulsive the discouraging nature of their toil.

"Nay, brother," at length responded the more confident and energetic Dane; "it were a sin and a foul disgrace, both to manhood and philosophy, were we to faint under the high and mysterious task decreed by

Destiny to our performance. Let us, therefore, take heed that the noble importance of the trust be uppermost in our consideration; setting aside, as unworthy, all selfish motives, in the conduct of so dignified an undertaking. Then shall the memory of this night's adventure go down, with unblenching lustre, to remotest ages; causing our names to be enrolled among those of the loftiest instruments of providential power. For myself, I feel as if a supernatural strength were accorded to me; and (as I doubt not but you may feel tired), you may e'en spare yourself the severe labour of—"

"Tut, a pin! man," hastily returned the Antiquary; his good humour getting the better of his momentary peevishness; "I care as little as thyself for the labour. Labour! 'Hey, Got's lords and his ladies!' I have dug many a deeper concavity than would have served as a fair vault for thy beloved Rosicrucius and his famous lamp-defending statue. Ay—'as sure as God 's in Gloucester,' have I; by yea and no, I have. I 'm an old dog at the thing. Come, Saint Nicholas be our speed! the time wears: let us, like Dan Death, knock boldly at the 'regum turres,' and strike out a welcome for ourselves! 'Audaces Fortuna juvat!' "

Sir Ernest Oldworthy then seized anew his grounded mattock, and with a dexterity that evinced a long experience in manual labour, re-commenced a vigorous attack on the stern and slowly-yielding soil; ac-

companying his exertions with an occasional snatch from some old ballad, or *sirvente*, about William the Conqueror, or William Rufus, which he chanted in a richly-humorous vein, and with no mean share of artistic skill and effect:—

'As his chamberlain him brought, as he rose on a day,
A Morrow for to wear a pair of Hose of Say,
He asked what they costned, Three Shillings he seid,
Fie a dibles, quoth the King, who say so vile a Deed,
King to wear so vile a Cloth, but it costned more;
Buy a pair for a Mark, or thou shalt ha cory sore.
A worse Pair enough, the other with him brought,
And seyd they costned a mark, and uneath he them bought,
Aye bel-amy, quoth the King, these were well bought,
In this manner serve me, or ne serve me not.'

"Marry, well sung, old Robin o' Gloucester!—Heugh—eugh—ugh—how notably hard it turns up, this Derbyshire hill-soil!—Gramercies," he continued, puffing now and then for breath, or pausing to shake the streaming rain from his hat; "how the wind 'rombles and swoughs' (as the Alto-Pecco, or High Peak dialect has it), from the north-east! I take it, brother Dánskiölldr, that old Odin and the Æsir are now puzzling their immortal brains, as well as those of Dan Mimer's wiser pate, to discover what they shall do with their pet 'shield-warrior,' when we have thrown him back upon their hands. 'Faith, I trow there may be many opinions on that point, and the debate, unless the Nornir cut it short, prove a long one. Gad-a-mercy, *there* again—and *there*—and *there!*—

that deep blustering sort of growl, swelling louder and louder on the ear, and then dying away with a solemnly meted cadence, is from the voice of the All-fader himself! Now there is a moment or two's profound silence amongst the Æsir; indicating the transient awe of the cloud-seated assembly at the speech of the 'Furious One.' And now that shrill piping, whiff-divided gale, that has sprung up so suddenly, bespeaks the reply of the ancient ruler's 'better half'—good Madam Friga; whose queenly vote on the question I can take upon myself resolutely to declare. 'Find him a fleet,' quoth she, 'and let him fight back his way to the sceptre of his sires! The halls of Lethra are no more, but the *Dragon of the Shield* shall hew him out a den with the ancient steel of Sindri!' Now, the gods are all shouting or speaking together; Heimdallar blows his mystic horn; the gold-combed cock of Asgard crows his lustiest cheer; and a glorious far-resounding chorus prevails,—the 'O ho! O ho!' of ancient Odin rising far above the united tones of his queen-rib and the rest of the Æsir. 'Slid! they have wakened the old raven in the trees above us. '*Quaw, caw, quoi, quo, quaw!*' says he, vexed at being disturbed in his second sleep, while dreaming of marvellous maggots and daintiest dew-worms: which remark of his, put into Shakspearian English, might read something like—'A pox o' your throats, you bawling, blasphemous, incharitable dogs! A plague upon your howling, you wide-chapped ras-

cals!' Or am I wrong, and is it Hugin, or Munin, one of the favourite ravens used by Odin, as spies and messengers, come to take a sly peep at our doings; and who, with an oath of good old Norsk currency, bids us angrily make more speed?—Dig away, brother," he continued, with an air of comic solemnity, as he observed the perspiration streaming down the cheeks of his companion, occasioned by the extreme stubbornness of the soil, and the resistance of the roots of trees; "dig away, brother, 'aurum in ærario est,' as Cicero says; 'the money is in the treasury.' We have but to go *deep*,—

'*Dig* deep, or taste not the *Pactolean* spring!'"

Then, changing his expression for an air of more familiar humour, he added,—"Fall to 't yarely,—bestir, bestir!—Heigh, my hearts; cheerly, cheerly, my hearts; yare, yare. There is gold for the asking. Ay, by the venerable shade of Pontoppidan, and—

'Vaults with Northern nectar stored,
Larders throng'd with ponderous viands!'

"Ah, sirrah, quoth-a,—we shall—

'Do nothing but eat, and make good cheer,
And praise heaven for the merry year;
When flesh is cheap and females dear,
And lusty lads roam here and there,
So merrily,
And ever among so merrily.'

"That 's a merry heart!—Strike up the gittern!—

What say'st thou—a cup of Vernage, or Malmsey?—Come, come—a song—a roundel or bergeret, whichever thou pleasest!—Come, be blithe!—Some wine, ho!—

'Go, Turk! and frown at smiling wine,
From thy parch'd lip the gladder repelling!
Norway's praise we yet prolong,
Strand, and dale, and fell our song;
Till a bumper drowns the lay:—
To all friends who are near, and all friends far away!'

"Hoo, hoo!—As the Kentish proverb says, 'I feel as merry as a rook on a Sunday!' Ay, or as bold Robin Hood, when, in the disguise of a butcher, he regaled his brethren of the trade at Nottingham. How goes the old ballad? 'S heart! I have it,—

'Come, fill us more wine, said jolly Robin,
Let's be merry while we stay;
For wine and good cheer, be it ever so dear,
I vow I the reck'ning will pay.
Come, brothers, be merry, said jolly Robin,
Let's drink, and ne'er give o'er,
For the shot I will pay, ere I go my way,
If it costs me five pounds or more.'

"Heart o' my body, there's nothing like wine after all. 'Ad lætitiam datum est vinum!' so saith the pious Chrysostome. And what saith the high-souled Anacreon?—

'Μεθύοντα γάρ με κεῖσθαι
Πολὺ κρεῖσσον, ἢ θάνοντα,

"'It is better to lie down drunk than dead!' 'Drink,

brothers, drink!' so saith the sage Bumbur. 'Atque ego sic,' and so say I. Ay, marry, again and again. 'Vivat Bacchus!' Odslid! we'll have t'other stave—

> 'A cup of wine, that's brisk and fine,
> And drink unto the leman mine;
> And a merry heart lives long-a.'

"By the *parola di cavaliere*, we'll make a night on't. Give me thy hand, Philosopher. Jove make me thankful for thy fellowship." And again he glided off into a merry catch:—

> "'I'll tell you a story, a story so merry,
> Concerning the Abbot of Canterbury,
> And of his house-keeping and high renown,
> Which made him repair to fair London town,
> "*Derry down, down, hey derry down.*'

"By-the-bye, Dånskiölldr, few persons who hear the old merry refrain or burthen—'Derry down, derry down, hey derry down!' imagine that it formerly constituted, with little alteration in pronunciation or orthography, the awful chorus to the Druidical hymns; the literal signification being—'Let us dance round the oak!'—Out a pize, these roots puzzle my wisdomship entirely. So, so, we are getting to the sandstone. The pebbles, and flints, and boulders, were near oversetting us. Dig away, brother Dånskiölldr. 'Sbud, fear nothing.

> "'How now, quoth King John, 'tis told unto me,
> That thou keepest a far better house than I;
> If thou dost not answer me questions three,
> Thy head shall be taken from thy body,'
> "*Derry down, down, hey derry down.*'

"Touching my minstrelsie, good kinsman, I may say with *Reynard*, in the comedy of 'Tunbridge Walks,' —'You see, forsooth, I'se no fine singer, but, i'faith, I'se be th' loudest ev'ry Sunday in our church for all that; haugh.'

"'And if thou dost not answer me questions three,
Thy head shall be taken from thy body.'
"*Derry down, down, hey derry down.*"

"Dig away, brother Dánskiölldr, dig away,—

"'The fox, the ape, and the bumble bee,
Were still at odds, being but three:
Until the goose came out of door,
Staying the odds by adding four.'

"'Sbud, fear nothing. Away with it. Fling it out. We have now got below the roots.

"'These lovers cry—Oh! oh! they die!
Yet that which seems the wound to kill,
Doth turn oh! oh! to ha! ha! he!
So dying love lives still:
Oh! oh! a while, but ha! ha! ha!
Oh, oh! groans out for ha! ha! ha!'

"Hey ho! 'let the world slip, we shall ne'er be younger.'

"'Be merry, be merry, my wife's as all;
For women are shrews, both short and tall;
'Tis merry in hall, when beards wag all,
And welcome merry shrove-tide.'

"Be merry, be merry! I'faith, better advice never came from the lip of the physician."

While Sir Ernest Oldworthy thus indulged the playful whim of the moment, conjuring up visions of fes-

tive enjoyment or ludicrous disport, to cheer the dull irksome labours that awaited him; his less imaginative colleague lost by degrees his former self-possession, and seemed momentarily sinking into a deep, settled distrust of the reality of his supposed mission. They had now excavated to the depth of five feet, and still the same hard and firmly-embedded rock presented itself to their toilsome progress. The Antiquary became gradually depressed by the dejected air of his associate; and a long and moody silence, unbroken save by the echoing strokes of the pick-axe, or the harsh, grating thrusts of the mattock, succeeded. At the very moment, however, when, if we could have read the hearts of the mortified adventurers, we should have seen the last glimmering spark of hope expire, a broad cleft suddenly appeared across the anxiously-watched space, disclosing what seemed to be the mysterious object of their search.

"Holy Saint Ancharius (4)! what is that? Is it —can it be—yes, it *is*—it *is* the broad stone which was said to cover the secret mouth of the descent! All the blessed saints in heaven be praised! Saint Olaf (5)—Saint Ludgar (6)—Saint Badeges" (7)! vociferated the overjoyed Philosopher, dancing with ludicrous and almost insane energy. "Nay, I will give thanks," he exclaimed, "to my great ancestor Odin himself! Now, 'brother Doctor,' what say you? Am I a 'dreaming visionary?' Have I mistaken a 'jack-a-lantern for a genie?' By the sacred bark of

Saint Mildred, I would forfeit the best tractate I ever penned—ay, even my 'De Lucernis Antiquorum Perpetuis' (8), to see one blessed inch below yon mysterious barrier!" And he threw down his mattock, and clasped his hands in a paroxysm of delight.

The object alluded to was a huge, round, dark-coloured stone, and shewed, according to the precedaneously-excited fancy of both heroes, decided marks of having once been engraved with many now unintelligible characters, mixed with strange cabalistical lines and Runic letters; while it bore, also, under the same partial and latitudinarian interpretation, the imperfect lineaments of a once painted couchant 'Dragon.'

"Now," pursued the Philosopher, with a beaming smile that seemed to clothe his very figure from head to foot, "now shall we realize the glorious distinction of being recorded to the doomsday of mankind, as the —hark! 'Cent mille de cannons!'—One tousand deyvils!—What was that?"

A dead silence followed the question; but, a moment or two afterwards, there was again heard a hollow, rumbling noise, like that of distant thunder. Ere its long-protracted sounds decayed, the eddying blast careered along the underwood, and drowned, in its rustling violence, the faintly-receding echoes. Again all was silent; and the adventurers paused in their task to listen for a recurrence of the singular disturbance. After an interval of some minutes, the terrific

interruption was repeated, with far greater loudness; and, as it increased, its subterranean source was indicated by a trembling of the earth. It commenced with a deep, rolling sound, like that of thunder, which gradually became more acute, and seemed, as the Philosopher afterwards observed, to combine with the explosion of electric fluid the action of grinding rocks of marble in some huge mill; then was there a sudden and appalling crash, as if a range of mighty rocks, or pillars, had given way; while a more continuous and less violent noise, like the sliding fall of immense bodies of soil, accompanied, at intervals, the whole stupendous succession of repercussive alarms. When this tempest of direful sounds had passed away, there suddenly arose a shrill and hissing disturbance, as of a prodigious wind that was forcing itself through some newly-acquired channel of escape. The earth again trembled more violently and continuously than before. The broad stone became loosened by the convulsive motion beneath, and soon afterwards sank into a yawning chasm, on whose giddy edge our septentrionalian discoverers found themselves standing; a situation yet more fearful, through the precarious footing afforded by the loose, recently-excavated soil. Almost fainting with terror, and totally oblivious of the object of their enterprise, they instinctively gazed upon the hideous depth revealed to them; and which seemed, like the fascinating gaze of the serpent, to regard them as its prepared victims. Nor was their

fate long delayed; for, ere they had conquered their first emotions of alarm at this discovery, the crumbling acclivity on which they stood gave way, through the influence of some sudden shock, carrying abruptly along with it the unfortunate operators into the unexplored and sombrous abyss beneath!

> "Facilis descensus Averni,
> Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras!"

After the lapse of a few bewildered moments, the startled pair found themselves prostrate, but unhurt, at the foot of a narrow, well-like excavation, into which the light of the lanterns from above sufficiently penetrated to shew the dismal horrors of their confinement. A dreadful foreboding of further descents of the soil, consigning them to the miserable fate of being buried alive, seized on the minds of the hapless adventurers.

"*O Dieu vivant!*—Beloved Mary, protect us! Holy Saint Willebrord (9), pray for us!" and a host of other pious ejaculations were offered by the unhappy Philosopher, in a tremulous voice, and with increasing fervour of expression.

"*Burraco d'Inferno!*" exclaimed Sir Ernest, not less amazed and confounded by this awful and unforeseen occurrence. The still more protracted torture of death by starvation presented itself to his vivacious imagination, in every aggravated phase of suffering. Their sole hope of extrication, and that a feeble one, was afforded by the circumstance of the lanterns being

suspended from the ash-tree above; which was calculated to attract the observation of those who might pass along the neighbouring, but rarely-frequented bye-path.

The deep chasm into which they had thus unintentionally descended, was about five feet in diameter, and resembled, in its general regularity of construction, the dry-well of some ancient fortress; but it was evident, from the huge, unhewn masses of sand-stone which composed the sides of the cavity, that it was rather the work of Nature, in some sudden caprice. Sundry vast blocks of stone lay heaped together at the bottom; and several spacious lateral apertures existed in the upper part of the descent,—circumstances which at length suggested to Dr. Dánskiölldr (whose belief in magical influence was yet unconfirmed), that the appalling sounds which they had heard proceeded from the fall of these masses of rock; which, being, through some previous convulsion or violent action, in a fractured state, had, during the recent course of excavation above, been naturally loosened and separated by the sudden disturbance of the implements; and thus precipitated into the deep cavity over which such fragments had impended; causing, thereby, those hollow reverberations that, to the before excited fancy of the hearer, had appeared more terrific than the voice of thunder, and resembling rather—

"The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds!"

And, with the same philosophical discrimination, he

attributed the hissing noise, which had followed the louder disturbance, to the escape of mephitic air through some unseen channel newly opened by such dislodgement; and communicating, by an equally simple process, with the aperture which had been recently formed in the soil above. However this might be, the situation of our adventurers was at once a dismal and ridiculous one, suggesting the quaint prayer of the poet—

> "Oh, for the heart of Homer's Mice,
> Or Gods to save them in a trice!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE MYSTERIOUS SURPRISE.

SCIOLT. There is some danger in *this chance*, my dull
Heart beats with slow and ominous leysure.
The Just Italian, Act iv. sc. 1.

SCOP. Whence is *that noise ?*
Ibidem.

A GLOOMY train of penitential thoughts occupied, for a long interval, the minds of the unhappy Chevaliers, as chilled and wearied, terrified and despairing, they clung to the broken rock that composed the sides of the deep black cavity. "Rem carendo, non fruendo, cognoscimus." How did the bright and genial sanctuary of his little parlour, with its snug accompaniments of softly-cushioned chairs, and still more luxurious couches—its well-trimmed lamps, and blazing wood-fire—the steaming kettle murmuring in tones of quiet joy, as if to remind the owner of that cheerful indulgence with which its instrumentality was so frequently combined—the social cricket adding its familiar notes of domestic enjoyment to the charm of tranquillity that reigned around;—how did it shine forth, we say, with all its happy associations, before

the Antiquary's teeming fancy; and how contentedly would he have given the whole contents of his cabinet and armoury, and the wealth of the good King Askew's hoards to boot, for the restoration of its serene and long-endeared comforts!

And how did the heart of the Philosopher yearn for the cozy nook beside the glowing furnace of his laboratory; where he had so often complacently watched the reflected flame playing, in inverted spires, on the polished surface of his retorts and receivers! How did crucible and blow-pipe, alembic and mortar, group themselves before his mind's eye, and seem to chide his unusually-prolonged absence from that scene of his soul-engrossing speculations!

The Antiquary was the first to recover some portion of his scattered energies; and, in proportion to the gradual return of his composure, did an involuntary sense of the ludicrous steal over his late apprehensions and despair.

"Ah, brother doctor," he exclaimed, shrugging up his shoulders with an air of well counterfeited disappointment; "I fear me, if our names go down to posterity now, it will be in a sort of counterpart story to that of the 'Children in the Wood;' albeit, it may be questioned, methinks, whether so large a share of sympathy will accrue to us as to our more renowned prototypes of nursery memory. But cheer up, kinsman. 'Truth, they say, lies in a *Well;*' and, as philosophers, we were bound to seek for her. 'Let

well alone!' is, however, an adage of equal antiquity and note; and, truly, I should have been quite as *well* satisfied, if, in this instance, we had abided by it. But again I say, brother, cheer up—let us remember another edifying monition of our ancestors' sagacity,—'All 's *well* that ends *well;*' and we may yet hope, through the blessing of Saint Ancharius, Saint Olaf, Saint Ludgar (or, as I have been used to call him, Saint Liudger), Saint Badeges, and Saint Willebrord, to escape the awful and affecting fate that would cause our history to be assimilated to the juvenile tragedy referred to. Marry, when thou dancest again, like David before the ark, in my old arras bed-hangings; or, rather, like the elephant on the rope, among the curious cuts which adorn my old copy of 'Pliny's Natural History,'" he continued, with a hearty laugh, which he could no longer suppress; "let it be on firmer ground, lest the weight of thy philosophy sink thyself and others into a pit from which there may be no deliverance. Thou didst say, brother, that thou wouldst give thy best tractate, ay, even thy 'De Lucernis Antiquorum Perpetuis,' to see one blessed inch *below* the broad stone that lay at the mouth of this gulf; and didst attest the solemnity of thy desire by a devout allusion to the holy ship of Saint Mildred; yet now, methinketh, thou couldst willingly give thanks unto thy great ancestor Odin—nay, unto Loki himself,—to see one blessed inch *above* it; supposing it to be *in statu quo ante.* But take cheer,

again I say, brother doctor and brother knight; thou wert no 'dreaming visionary,' as appeareth, meseems, from the *grave reality* of our present situation; yet trust me, if thou didst not mistake a 'jack-a-lantern for a genie' thy genie, as a less fortunate consequence, hath proved himself a jack-a-lantern,—leading us, like Robin Goodfellow, to our harm, in this cursed old dry-well. Now mayest thou, good master Alchymist, well amuse thy ingenious leisure, by changing a few of these rude stones into ingots of gold; while I betake myself to the 'golden numbers' of Meton, and endeavour to enliven the depths of this Skaldic abode with a leisurable investigation of that learned mathematician's 'Ἐννεακαιδεκαετηρίς,' or 'cycle of nineteen years;' whereby I may hope to prove, brother, unto thy entire satisfaction and my own, that the solar and lunar years could regularly begin from the same points in the heavens. By the famous golden beard of Æsculapius, and by the golden mouth of Æschylus, we will give that vixen witch, Misfortune, the lie yet,—ay, to her very teeth—the foul, impudent, ill-conditioned baggage!"

The Philosopher sighed deeply, and concealed his face with his hands; seeming about to give way to the pressure of despair. Taking a seat beside him on the circular Runic stone which had guarded the mouth of the descent, the Antiquary continued to address him in jocular mood:

"What, man, art thou seeking to re-visit the hall

of thy Scandinavian Somnus? In vulgar phrase, art thou going to sleep? Dost thou desiderate another parley with old Hreggvidarnautr, the chief Skald? Marry, shouldst thou again behold that worthy old person, tell him, I beseech thee, in the name of Ernest Oldworthy, of Hreopandún, in the Isle of Britain, that that 'mystic chain' of his may be matched in length by a towing-line which I once read of in some ancient and venerable compend of the nature of Joe Miller's Jest-Book. Cod so, for want of better amusement, I will tell thee the story:—'An Irishman, who served on board a man-of-war in the capacity of a waister, was selected by one of the officers to haul in a tow-line of considerable length, which was towing over the tafrail. After rowsing in forty or fifty fathoms, which had put his patience severely to proof, as well as every muscle of his arms, he muttered to himself, 'Sure, it 's as long as to-day and to-morrow! It 's a good week's work for any five in the ship!—Bad luck to the arm or leg it 'll leave me at last!—What! more of it yet!—Och, murder; the sa's mighty deep to be sure!' After continuing in a similar strain, and conceiving there was little probability of the completion of his labour, he suddenly stopped short, and addressing the officer of the watch, exclaimed:—'Bad manners to me, sir, if I don't think somebody 's *cut off the other end of it!*' "

The Antiquary might have extended his facetious remarks much further; more particularly as the dis-

concerted philosopher seemed in no humour to reply to them; but he checked himself in the midst of his pleasantry; or, rather, he was visited by an interruption of an unexpected nature.

For now the meditations of either party were suddenly arrested by a louder repetition of the strange sounds which had previously accosted their ear; and which appeared to have been occasioned by the violent escape of pent up winds through some forced aperture in the depths of the earth. The rugged sides of the chasm trembled and rocked; exciting in the unhappy minds of our explorers of Pagan mystery, the new and horrible fear of being pressed to death by an incidental collapse. The terror of the unfortunate sufferers was soon afterwards still more strongly excited; and their immediate dissolution seemed inevitable, though arising from a source less apparent. The ground, with the circular stone on which they were seated, suddenly sank to an indefinitely-remote distance; and again were they violently precipitated into the depths of unknown darkness, amid the thundering crash of dislodged portions of the rocky soil, which threatened to inhume them, or at least to dash their forms into fragments beneath the ponderous wreck. They were still, however unhurt; a circumstance in itself, that seemed little less than a miracle. The mass of stone and soil which had accompanied them, fortunately preceded their fall; and, by an equally lucky disposition of its scattered fragments,

the softer and lighter portions remained uppermost, so as to furnish a convenient *terminus* for their abrupt descent.

"O beloved Mary, protect us! Holy Saint Willebrord, pray for us!" again ejaculated the philosopher; while, it must be confessed that, like Macbeth, our worthy Antiquary felt that he had "need of blessing," and "amen stuck in his throat."

The attention of each was now earnestly directed to the widely-varied discord of notes, presented by the supposed transition of vast bodies of long-confined air, through numerous channels of escape, suddenly opened. Ranging through every point of the chromatic scale, with an utter disregard of harmonious combination, the sounds thus elicited resembled, in some degree, the effect produced by the capricious rambling of a child's fingers over the keys of an organ, intent to call forth every diversity of tone, from the lowest diapason to the small flute-stop, and to blend them together with every possible gradation of contrariety, instead of agreement.

"*Prô deûm atque hominum fidem!*" cried Sir Ernest Oldworthy, unable any longer to restrain the jocularity of his ideas, "I have it, sure enough. We have not, as we falsely imagined, fallen into the depths of an old disused well, from which the chances of escape were slender; but we are actually, at this moment, within the *penetralia* of King Askew's royal palace; and that strange assemblage of inconsentaneous sounds is no-

thing less than the united snoring of the Enchanted Sleepers! *Au! desine! st!*—Hark!—that deepest note of all, which resembles the moan of a half-throttled elephant, is, doubtless, the more magnificent performance of majesty itself!—By Saint Luke and his ox, brother, I breathe again! Yea, I could well nigh give thanks unto Mahomet, throwing in an *ave* by the way to his three-humped dromedary. Arouse thyself, most illustrious philosopher; life and glory are yet before us; and we shall still hold a place in the memory of ages! Come, let us take heart, and greet our Danish progenitors with a true septentrionalian '*Hael!*' Remember the old song:—

> ''T is merry in hall,
> When beards wag all;'

And I would hold a crown, brother Dánskiölldr,—nay, I would bet 'seign peawnd t' a tuppunny jannock,' as they say in Lancashire, that the moment we have roused old Askew from his eight hundred and fifty years' sleep, he will ask for his supper! 'Ahoa! by Odin,' says 'a, 'a pickled porpoise, and a dish of peppered broth!' Or, mayhap, a boar's head, or *hure*, as it was called, with a rosy apple between its white tusks, may better suit the royal fancy. As the old song goes:

> 'The bore's heed, I understande,
> Is the cthefe (11) servyce in this lande,
> 'Loke where ever it be fande
> *Servite cum cantico!*'

Gads wookers, I'll warrant thee, the court larder

aboundeth with stirring provocatives to appetite; and the Danish cellarage lacketh not a plentiful supply of *idromel, pigment* (12), and *morat* (13), and of wine, ale, and cider, of right royal potency.

> 'Fill the cup, and let it come;
> I'll pledge you a mile to the bottom.'

"The boar's head, for a whet, say I, and there's my cap!

> 'Be gladde, lordes, both more and lasse,
> For this hath ordeyned our stewarde
> To cheer you all this Christmasse,
> The bore's heed with mustarde!'

"And then, *pardie!* for an *obba* (14) of spiced ale from the great bowl!—'Oh, cry you mercy, noble philosopher, your company!' as saith that worthy old King, Lear, in the storm scene:—

> 'What's else to say?
> Be jolly, lords.'

"Come, don't look so very dull, like patient Grizzle in a decayed picture, posted over an old chimney. O' my conscience, friend, thou lookest as sour as a conceited alderman who would be thought wise!"

But the Antiquary's hilarious humour was again destined to confinement within its copious reservoir; for, at the next terrible moment, the rock beside them gave way with a crash that seemed to shake the very entrails of the globe. The tongue of the speaker

clave to the roof of his mouth, and every hair on his head stood erect—

"Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

"By all the saints in the calendarium!" exclaimed the Chevalier Dánskiölldr, with a tone of renewed assurance that startled his companion almost as much as the preceding shock; "the adventure is still our own! Behold!—and mock no more!" He pointed towards the south-east side of the now enlarged recess, where a huge ragged fissure was formed in the rock, and through which a pale tremulous light was visible.

"This passage," he continued, devoutly crossing himself, and afterwards kissing the small Saint Esprit that hung at his neck, "has been opened by no mortal agency!—*Grand Dieu!* I now distinctly see a distant apartment!"

"On, then, 'let's to the Capitol!'" returned the Antiquary, catching some portion of the recovered confidence of his companion; although his nerves yet shook with the violent emotions which he had recently experienced.

"May the history of this night's adventure," renewed the Chevalier Dánskiölldr, "stand for ever enrolled among the loftiest achievements of human daring!"

"As well as amongst the most curious records of mortal enterprise!" added the other; "may the old nursery tale of the 'Well of the World's End' prove a fool to it!"

"Amen, amen, amen!" thrice exclaimed the Philosopher, with the same deep solemnity that was manifested in his former remark; "let us fear nothing. 'Audaces Fortuna juvat!' as you well observe, Sir Ernest. Were the dreadful Thor himself, the 'Thunderer,' the 'Wielder of Lightning,' seated, thunderbolt in hand, upon his throne of fire, I would yet trust in the majestic panoply of my Christian armour, as a shield against himself, and all the powers of Heathenesse!"

"Be ours the war-cry of the Normans at Hastings," suggested his anxious associate; "'*Dieu aide! Dieu aide!*'" And he hummed a few notes of the "Song of Roland," to excite a martial spirit in his still-palpitating breast. "Gad-zoons," he added, after a short interval, wherein he had succeeded in restoring some part of his usual hilarity and courageousness; "I warrant me, brother, if the 'Dragon of the Shield' himself should attack us, I would give him a counterbuff for his *canvasada*. Yea, I would tip him a Roland for his Oliver! I would write him a *consummatim* in the names of the three Kings of Cologne. I' faith, I grow 'as quarrelsome as a gamecock at a looking-glass.' Ca, ha! Ca, ha! 'Onward,' 'onward!' 'Floreat Amarantus!' 'Sbud! fear nothing, brother Dánskiölldr; I tell you I'd scotch him and notch him like a carbonado!" And the next moment saw him cheerfully invocating the "jolly god" in the fine *chanson à boire*, which we have before had occasion to quote:—

'Come, thou monarch of the vine,
Plumpy Bacchus, with pink eyne!
In thy vats our cares be drown'd,
With thy grapes our hairs be crown'd:
Cup us, till the world go round;
Cup us, till the world go round.'

"The last two lines form the chorus. Now, Dánskiölldr, join us in it. We will 'clap into 't roundly, without hawking, or spitting, or saying we are hoarse; which are the only prologues to a bad voice.'

'Cup us, till the world go round;
Cup us, till the world go round!'"

Whether it was that the conviction felt by the Philosopher, in regard to the successful issue of his great adventure, lent a tone of elation to his excited spirits; or, whether it was that the deep draughts of wine and brandy which he had imbibed at the Antiquary's hospitable board, provoked an unusual efflorescence of convivial ideas, we know not; but would fain ascribe his concurrence in his associate's gay proposition to the united effects of both causes. Certain it was, that his deep manly voice was speedily heard in accompaniment, and the rugged chasm rang through its dreary depths with the mirth-inspiring strain:—

'Cup us, till the world go round;
Cup us, till the world go round!'

"Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Bravo, bravo!" cried the Antiquary, reeling with a grotesque air, by way of

evincing the delight of his spirit; "'*Vivat Bacchus!*' Now, my dear boy, again —

> 'Cup us, till the world go round;
> Cup us, till the world go round!'

"*Bravo! bravissimo! archi-bravissimo!*" again exclaimed Sir Ernest; "I may say, with the *Page*, in 'As You Like It,'—'I' faith, i' faith, and both in a tune, like two gypsies on a horse.'"

Had any "misled and lonely traveller" heard those mysterious sounds proceeding from the recesses of the thicket, and caught a glimpse of the lights suspended from the tree, how might he have deemed that the spell of the poet was realized to his wakeful imagination, and that the revels of Comus and his crew were there enacted; while the peerless Úna was haply still roving amid the tangled intricacies of that thorny brake, and yet to be preserved by the potent charm of her "saintly chastity," from the wild, licentious approaches of the goblin-rout. Or, it might have brought to his illuded fancy the forest of old Arden, and reminded him of the impatience of the gentle Rosalind, when she exclaims to her rude companions: "Pray you, no more of this; 'tis like the howling of Irish wolves against the moon."

CHAPTER X.

HOPES AND CERTAINTIES.

THWACK. Pallatine, the designe grew all dreamě, magick,
And alchymie to mee: *I gave it lost!*
The Witts, Act iii. sc. 1.

SCIOLT. Magnanimous Rabbin, *thou hast conquered us,*
We yield to thy Phylosophie; I would
Kneele downe for expiation of my mis-beliefe,
But that my joints are old, and it were troublesome
To rise agén; my fine Magicall Mounsier,
Be courtly in thy Learning, embrace us, and forgive our Heresie.
The Platonick Lovers, Act iv. sc. 1.

TAKING up their mattocks, which had fortunately accompanied them in their involuntary descent, our Chevaliers, with some difficulty, clambered through the opening, and found themselves in an irregularly-excavated and gradually-descending passage of considerable extent, whose further limits were lost in vapoury gloom. They soon afterwards observed a low and narrow door-way rudely fashioned in the rock; and advanced, with cautious steps, in the direction of this inner entrance; grounding their mattocks to test the soundness of the path as they proceeded—

a precaution which the broken condition of the rock more strongly recommended. On reaching the aperture they perceived a small stone-built angularly-roofed cell, of most rugged aspect, into which the unsteady gleam of some distant light was admitted through a second door-way, corresponding with the first. Hastily traversing its desolate-looking interior, and passing through the opening beyond, they gained another lengthened and dismal passage, still in a continuous but horizontal line of approach; and progressed, with the same degree of caution, in the direction of the glimmering and distant radiance, "full of majesty and mystery," which now appeared to issue from the entrance of an apartment of some kind, situate at the termination of this narrow vista. The imprisoned and heightened sound reverberating from the walls was like nothing earthly. There was something awful, too, in the effect of that shrouded illumination; reminding our antiquary of the mysteterious light which pervades the cave of the Grendel, and beams from the magic statues presiding over that of the Fire-drake (15). Curling wreaths of vapour rendered more indistinct the source from which the feeble rays extended; but, as our adventurers drew nearer, they beheld a circularly-arched door-way, constructed of stone; and, on halting for a moment's consideration, the Philosopher, whose powers of vision were, in such matters, more acute than his associate's, detected the moving shadow of a human being

across the floor of the chamber into which they were about to introduce themselves. This incident, which did not arise from the flickering glare of the concealed luminary, but evidently originated in the motion of the object itself, gave a new turn to the adventure; as hitherto they had not calculated on meeting with any other than the sleep-bound occupants of the royal apartments. Was it possible that the process of resuscitation from the effects of the spell had been accomplished by other means than those signified to the Philosopher in his visions; or had some chance adventurer discovered this subterranean abode of mystery, and availed himself of the opportunity to enrich his stores with the booty of King Askew's treasury? Either conjecture was most depressing to the hopes of the previously-rejoicing colleagues. In the former case, the tie of gratitude with which they had expected to bind the monarch and his court was annihilated, at least so far as any personally-beneficial result of their efforts in favour of the restoration of the entranced parties was involved; and in the latter instance, although they might still enjoy the coveted distinction of being accessory to so high an event as the delivery of those royal and noble worthies from the bondage of the charm, yet the inanition of the princely coffers would preclude the exercise of princely generosity, thereby defeating the learned Antiquary's anticipations of filling to excess his coin-trays with unique and priceless specimens of the Anglo-Saxon mintage,

and disappointing the Philosopher's visions of ampler means for the furtherance of his favourite researches after the "Grand Arcanum." Or, it might be, that the rifler would not abandon the scene of his extensive plunder, till the destruction of themselves was added, or at least attempted, in support of the secrecy of his enterprise.

While, however, they were debating, in short and hurried whispers, how they should act in this emergency, it most opportunely occurred that Professor Dánskiölldr set his foot upon some object, which on examination proved to be an ancient bronze key, of very large size and curious workmanship, having a second set of wards at the bow-end of the pin, or, to speak still more technically, being a double-bitted key; and which had doubtless been thus presented, through the mediation of their unseen friend, the Skald, in due accordance with the working out of their mysterious mission. They received it, therefore, as a signal mark of intelligence that the adventure was still reserved for them, and at once boldly advanced, taking the additional protective step of raising their mattocks to a position of defence, lest any previous intruders should have visited the spot, and might suddenly assail them. Still it was not without beating hearts that they approached more nearly the dimly-lighted room; a portion of whose various marks of occupation they could now, with some distinctness, recognize.

The truthful nature of the Philosopher's visionary

revelations was, at length, placed beyond doubt; for, as they reached the termination of the approach, they gazed on ample tokens of the former, if not present, appropriation of these cryptic recesses. How did Sir Ernest Oldworthy's spirit glow with delight, when the first assurance of the seeming reality of their adventurous task was confirmed by the manifestations which now greeted him. Half suspecting the testimony of his sight, he again and again directed his searching scrutiny to the objects thus discovered, and which soon dissipated all remaining uncertainty that he really trod the pavement of King Askew's subterranean halls! Several spears and battle-axes were deposited in the corner of the apartment, facing the entrance; and on the wall above were suspended, trophy-wise, a shield of circular form, coated with bull's-hide, and bound and embossed with gilded metal, having a steel spike in the centre (reminding the Antiquary of the "yellow-rimmed" shields alluded to in Haralld's chronicle of the "Exploits of King Askew"), a mail jerkin, and a bear-skin cloak of gigantic dimensions, to which the head of the savage animal, with the tusks displayed, was attached, being intended to form a sort of hooded mask for the wearer.

Gazing, in feverish admiration, on these characteristic pledges of the successful issue of their adventure, they paused, as by mutual consent, for some minutes, ere they ventured to cross the threshold of the fearful chamber. But their excited ideas were suddenly re-

called from their tour of enquiry by an alarming circumstance. A sharp and ringing sound, as of the contact of a spurred heel with the stone pavement, startlingly aroused them from a momentary forgetfulness of the dangerous position in which their remarkable fate had placed them. Not long might they bear the agitating suspense which oppressed their spirits; and, as cowards are said to plunge at times into the thickest fight, to escape the greater terror of their own apprehensions, so these our heroic worthies, the modern representatives of Northern chivalry, hesitated but a few short instants, ere they rushed, rather than collectedly advanced, into the sphere of perilous action that awaited them.

CHAPTER XI.

RARE DISCOVERIES.

MIST. SNORE. Dayes o' my breath, I have not seen the like!
The Witts, Act iii. sc. 1.

MEAGER. Sir, *rare discoveries!*
Ibidem.

CEL. O wonderful, wonderful, and most wonderful wonderful, and yet again wonderful, and after that out of all whooping!
As You Like It, Act iii. sc. 2.

WILD and alarming was the sight that burst on the vision of the brethren of the "Amaranth," as they entered the mysterious chamber; while a deep and awful silence, unbroken save by the hollow wail of imprisoned winds, that rushed at intervals along the neighbouring passages, recalling an idea of the wintry deserts of the North—seemed to add to the terrible distinctness of the strange lineaments revealed to them.

Then stood they in the crowded presence of the dwellers of other years—amid fierce, bearded faces seamed with scars, and half-naked, sun-burnt forms,

that bore the grim, ferocious aspect of uncivilized warfare,—

> 'Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise,
> Grim faces threatening war;'—

constituting a scene that a Rosa or a Callot might have delighted to portray. Never, indeed, might fancy have pictured, even in the vague and often monstrous illusions of sleep, aught more terror-striking (16) than the savage and uncouth expression of the greater part of these living relics of former ages, as they leaned on their gigantic battle-axes, long halberds, or knotted clubs shod with iron; or reclined, in wild and picturesque attitudes, on the stone pavement of the dim and vaulted apartment.

"By the bell of Saint Guthlac! which charmed away all disorders of the head," exclaimed Sir Ernest Oldworthy, "I almost doubt whether these eyes really behold what they seem to see! Can it be real, or do I walk in the darkness and vacuity of a dream? I may say with mine old acquaintance, good Master Horace,—

> 'Vidistin'? an me ludit amabilis
> Insania?'

Very 'amabilis' to be sure! But say, Dánskiölldr, are we gazing on a picture by Antonio Tempesta; or is it a scene of Dánsk enchantment, such as we were in search of?—a sort of 'Vesper Borealis?'

> 'Or have we eaten of the insane root
> That takes the reason prisoner?'"

His learned companion seemed equally at a loss with himself to answer the question; for his late ingenious theory was entirely upset by the still renewed light of numerous torches which burned, with unyielding intensity, in these death-resembling recesses; and whose pitchy odour assured him that they were not to be accounted of the same nature as the perpetual lamps of the Ancients.

The first object which, in some degree, fixed their attention, was a huge, colossal figure, at the extremity of the spacious room, that stood with its menacing eye-balls directed towards themselves; while its terrific mouth was expanded to a preternatural space, reminding them of the fate of those unfortunates who found themselves, of old, in the dreary wilds of Scythia, inhabited by the Anthropophagi.

> 'A huge, unshapely giant,
> Far o'ertopping growth of man, rough with bristly hair and savage.'

His appearance reminded our worthy Antiquary of *Pandaro*, the giant, in "Palmerin of England," whose ponderous mace cannot be forgotten by the reader. Various other forms, equally monstrous and appalling, alternately attracted and repelled the eye. A few moments of anxious investigation assured our chivalric friends that the whole of the assembly, although disposed in the natural attitudes of vigilance, were under the influence of a deep, despotic sleep, broken only at intervals by the weak and half-prosecuted effort of some

to disengage themselves from the enthralling spell; or by a restless motion of the features in others, indicating the presence of disturbing dreams. Thus, the gigantic figure, first observed, stood as rigid and unmoved as a statue, save that its monstrous jaws opened and closed with a stern expression of cannibal glee. Another grasped, with wildest ferocity, a dagger at the belt, which, while it uttered strange guttural exclamations, it powerlessly endeavoured to withdraw from the scabbard. A third occasionally dashed its foot, as in frantic ire, on the echoing floor, causing the abrupt noise which had startled our adventurous worthies ere they entered the sombre-featured apartment.

Taking each a torch from the walls, the adventurers leisurely examined, though with trembling nerves and awful reflections, the wonderful and spirit-stirring scene, dwelling, with minute attention, on every particular form and phase, object and incident, of its yet scarcely credible, but obviously, real presentments. To this survey the red and hissing flame of the pine-wood brands, distorting, by its variable action, the vague and shadowy outlines of the strange figures before them, lent an appropriate accompaniment.

The form of the giant appeared clad in a short, grey cloak, covering the left shoulder, and buckling over the right. A species of garment, somewhat resembling the Scottish *kelt*, was girt around his waist, with a broad, studded belt: and his legs were

attired in the leathern bandages peculiar to the period. His vast, sinewy throat, and hirsute arms—the latter tattooed with hideous and repulsive figures, and Runic characters, meant, doubtless, as a charm against the weapons of an enemy—were exposed in all their rugged unseemliness. His hair of grizzled red, was, as a mark of the servile position of the wearer, cropped close to his ugly scalp; and his coarse and neglected beard, twining in matted locks, reached below his girdle. In one hand he held a ponderous battle-mace, bristling with iron spikes; whereat hung five or six huge balls of the same metal; while, with the other, he twitched instinctively at a bunch of enormous keys chained to his belt; a gesture which, probably, shewed that the duty of his office was the custody of the hapless prisoners that lay unransomed within the dreary vaults beneath.

On a side table, rudely and massively constructed, were sundry brazen dishes and trenchers, with cups of wood, bone, and horn, and flaggons and bottles covered with hard-boiled leather. An iron lamp was suspended above, and its rays were fitfully reflected from the shields and steel shirts that hung on the near wall. In a corner of the apartment was an immense pile of faggots, that seemed provided for a winter's supply; and a dwarf, of squalid, but robust, appearance, attired in sheep-skin, with a cap, exhibiting the fur of a brindled cat, had been engaged in replenishing the fire, whereon might be observed a cauldron on

a trivet with four legs, containing a goose, lately taken down from the wall, in a dried state; and having beneath it an unconsumed remnant of the yule log, as recently commemorative of the "Festival of the Sun." The smouldering embers were situate in the centre of the floor; and the smoke found, or, at least, sought an escape, through a wide aperture in the vaulted ceiling. Beside the remains of the yet heated fragments of wood, reclined a tall, active-looking youth, with a tabor in his hand; whose green dress, with a short, broad hunting-knife fastened to his girdle, and a bugle-horn slung round his right shoulder, indicated the occupation of a forester. Three large and savagely uncouth hounds reposed near him. A smile of festive mirth played across his bold and not unhandsome features; evincing that he revelled in the excitement of some joyous dream. One of his rude, but faithful, companions, seemed to share in its master's wanderings through the wilds of discursive fancy; since, ever and anon, it gave forth an eager cry, while its rough frame was convulsed, as in the panting vehemence of the chase.

But the most remarkable group was a party of gamesters, clad in polished iron cuirasses, and armed with long halberds, who had assembled round a drum, in one corner of this chamber of olden revel. One man of stalwart and soldier-like figure, whose features wore an arch and contemptuous frown, had been in the act of shaking the dice; his arm re-

maining extended over his head, in an attitude that partook of boastful defiance. It may be remarked that the northern nations were so extravagantly addicted to gaming, that instances were frequent, wherein, as a last and desperate resource, a beggared gamester would stake his person and liberty on "the hazard of the die." Another had conveyed, half-way, a cut-horn of foaming ale to his expecting lips, when the fatal moment arrived; verifying the truth of the homely adage—"There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip." A third, a looker-on, unanimated by the rivalry of the players, had been indulging himself in the luxurious enjoyment of a long drawn yawn, which had just been fixed and preserved at the extreme point of its perpetration. So irresistible, indeed, was the influence of this latter expression of somnolency, that the Antiquary and his companion found themselves simultaneously engaged in a ludicrous and involuntary imitation of its broad *abandon*. The rest of the party were variously disposed—some in the act of polishing their shields, or broad and heavy swords, or repairing their accoutrements; others occupied in deep colloquy, or in playing at "head or ship" with a small coin so stamped; as at the strange moment when their faculties were arrested by the spell, and the enchanter's wand had summoned them to an oblivion of their cares and pastimes; or consigned them to the confused memories and illusive representations of sleep.

The apparel of the greater part of these martial strangers consisted of close coats, or tunics, furnished with sleeves to the wrists, and girded at the waist with broad belts; having also loose skirts descending nearly to the knee, like the kelt of the Scottish highlanders. A cloak, or sagum, reached just below the bend of the knee, or a short cloak covering the left shoulder, and buckled on the right, constituted the chief part of their attire. Some there were, whose lower limbs were encased in short clothing terminating above the knee; but the chief of these wild-looking retainers wore no other garments than the tunic, and sagum, or the short cloak. A sort of laced open shoe, somewhat resembling the Roman caliga, equipped their feet in a manner suitable to the general freedom of their dress. Their belts were ornamented with very broad studs, or images of serpents; and one or more knives and daggers—some naked, others inclosed in rudely-decorated brazen sheaths—were affixed to these picturesque appendages. Their habits were generally of a black, dark-blue, or brown colour, trimmed with bear-skin; while a few were of green or grey tincture, similarly distinguished (17). Hats with projecting flaps turning upwards, and, in some instances, adorned with a falcon or eagle's plume, or an arrow-formed brooch of lead or silver, added to the striking and not ungraceful aspect of their varied costume.

"This, doubtless, is the royal guard-chamber," at

length remarked Sir Ernest Oldworthy; "and yon worthy gentleman seated at the table, with the hour-glass and short sword before him, is the officer of the watch. You may observe that his hair descends at great length (a privilege confined to rank), and that his habiliments are of a superior fashion. His tunic is of purple, lined with rich fur, and adorned with fringe; and he wears a costly bracelet set with beryls and crystals, on his left arm. The rest, with an exception or two, are guards; although it must be admitted, that their clothing and accoutrements yield little of the uniform aspect which may be noticed in those of my good King George's household-troops. Sooth to say, the procurator of the 'royal Dane' seems to have dealt somewhat in remnants and close cuttings. But *n'importe.* What such war-gear loses in formality, it gains in picturesqueness. The forester and the cell-keeper were evidently admitted to share the chorus of a song, or partake of a game of dice, and contrived to make good their quarters for the night by the cheerful wood fire, which, with its blazing yule log, presented no small relief from the lonely and winter night-watch without. Look, brother, at that dark, scowling berserk (18)—he, with his teeth clenched, and his hand grappling a half-drawn dagger. I warrant you he could tell of many 'a fearful sight of blood and death!' A fine subject for Rembrandt, Schalcken, or Gerard Honthorst, would be this ancient guard-room, with its strangely-

accoutred figures, dispersed armour, and eccentric gleams of light!"

"Come, let us proceed," said the Philosopher, impatiently; "we are yet only on the threshold of our adventure. Yon larger door with the 'Dragon' banner over it, (parguienne! how precisely does that ensign correspond with the representations of my dream)! must lead to the superior apartments. Let us try it. Ha! by the martyrdom of the 'doctor of doctors,' Saint Jerome, it is locked!—Parbleu! what is to be done?"

"Remember the key in our possession," hastily suggested the Antiquary; "it was, doubtless, presented to us for a specific and effectual purpose. Try it. Yes, thanks to the ancient and venerable Hreggvidarnautr, the door yields!—What see you?—A deep flight of steps, and—eh!—what?—oh, another dark passage beyond! that might well seem the work of demons and gnomes.—'Sdeath, how noisome and chilly is the damp mephitic air of these 'womby vaultages' —these 'chaotic concavities'—these old labyrinthine intricacies—these 'hidden realms of darkness!' And how strangely-offensive and stifling are, at times, the decay-engendered fumes and terebinthine odour emitted by these infernal pine-torches, as the wind sweeps their crackling blaze, sparks, and smoke, full in one's face! Shuh! they remind one at once of the charnel and the pest-house; or they might serve well to light up the supper-table of Don John, in the Spa-

nish play of 'The Statue;' when he regales, in the lower world, with the whole assembly of demons and hobgoblins!—Egad, I thought just now that I caught a glimpse of that old fellow's dagger behind me!—'Twere a pleasant sight, brother, to perceive ourselves followed by that grim-visaged Ogre with the pandicular jaws, and the other sombre occupants of this opaque mansion!—Hah! another door to the right, and leading, for aught I know, to the heart of the earth. How—locked? But the opposite wards of the double-key may ensure our admission. There—thanks to the worthy Skald, the barrier is removed! Let us see what may be the chamber to which it leads. Mind the current of air through that side passage!—By the bones of Alfred, I would give my best suit of chain-mail, of the date of Charlemagne—ay, even that which is said to have belonged to Holger Dánske (or Ogier the Dane, as he is called in the French romances), one of his noblest Paladins,—to clear the doubtful point, whether the Anglo-Saxons—mind, brother, that the sudden rush of air does not extinguish the torches!—coined in gold, or not; or whether, indeed, they had any other silver money than the mærra or bener pennies, and the smaller ones. Perchance,—nay, and most like,—in some 'rychlie-carvellyd' chest, or strong sack made of a web constructed from the horse-whale's hide (19), I may gladden my curious eye with up-heaped stores of ancient treasure—with marks and half-marks, mancuses

and scættas, thrymsas and sicli (20); as well as with those more ancient coins which were most esteemed in the North; and which, according to Tacitus, were pieces old and long-known, indented or impressed with a chariot and two horses!"

"'Dieu aide! Dieu aide!'" replied the Philosopher, emphasising the words.

And again Sir Ernest regaled himself with a snatch from the cantilena of "Roland;" the effect of which was rendered comic, rather than chivalresque, by the chattering of his teeth through the excessive cold and damp; which might well have caught their inspiration from the wilds of Scandinavia, with whose image they were so curiously associated. Sometimes, too, his voice exhibited an additional quaver, from the impressions of fear which still and anon stole over his mind, as some stronger gust of wind threatened to extinguish the torches; or, more alarming still, as some strange distant echo, at times resembling the stamping of battle-steeds in fierce encounter, and the angry clash of hostile shields and weapons, struck his painfully inquisitive ear. Numerous straight passages and winding corridors branched off into the yet unknown regions of this most complicated and curious labyrinth. On they wandered;—the interest of their extraordinary adventure becoming momentarily more intense and soul-absorbing. The walls were now observed to be covered with strange and

mysterious carvings—designs at once fantastic, grand, and terrible.

> "And of such mystic fancies in the range
> Of these deep-caverned sepulchres are found
> The wildest images, unheard of, strange,
> Striking, uncouth, odd, picturesque, profound,
> That ever puzzled antiquarian's brain."

On they wandered. At an unlucky instant, however, while they were, cautiously enough, doubling the angle of a wall, on their approach to a broader passage than the preceding one, a sudden and violent gust of wind, careering with eddying impetuosity, and with a shrill wailing sound, through the winding avenue, blew out the flame of both torches; and our worthy knights-errant were left in total, and, as it seemed, irremediable darkness. Need it be suggested that the savage and uncouth occupants of the guard-room appeared, to their excited fancy, to be slowly and stealthily closing round them; the spiked club of the Ogre, and the dagger of the Berserk, loomed and glared alternately through the obscurity; a vague delirious dread shook every nerve and muscle of the unfortunate pair; their limbs were bathed in an icy perspiration. To adopt the expression of a late writer, they "seemed to have entered on some vast mysterious realm, where 'ancient night,' expelled from the sunny world, had fixed, unmolested, her eternal dominion." Or the well-known lines of Virgil might have been recalled to the memory of

our hapless worthies with singular force of application:—

> 'Solâ sub nocte per umbram
> Perque domos Ditis vacuas, et inania regna!'

"Horror of horrors!" cried the appalled Antiquary, from whose mind every hope of success now vanished. "'Hic terminus ad quem!'" A rush of damp cold air increased the shivering tone of fear in which he spoke.

"'Hic terminus ad quem!'" sighed the Philosopher, "and a sad termination, truly! Parbleu! I would give all the jackets of chain-mail, and all the bener pennies that ever were forged or coined, for one peep at broad day-light through the arrow-slit of the old turret forming my laboratory, at Okolni. What a fool was I to wander forth, in this eighteenth century, in search of such marvellous tasks of adventure, as would have seemed incredible in the pages of a Gothic romance! And yet those dreams—those terrible dreams!"

"I' faith, brother Dánskiölldr," suggested the Antiquary, recovering, at length, under the usual influence of a jocose idea, from his painful despondency; "thou mayest now indulge thy genius for the visionary without interruption. Marry, our old friend, Master Ovid, might have had these subterranean recesses in his idea, when he penned his fine passage descriptive of the Hall of Somnus:—

> 'Est prope Cimmerios longo spelunca recessu,
> Mons cavus, ignavi domus et penetralia Somni :
> Quò nunquam radiis oriens, mediusve, cadensve,
> Phœbus adire potest : nebulæ caligine mistæ
> Exhalantur humo, dubiæque crepuscula lucis.'

"Our strange voyage of subterranean discovery seems to have reached its limits. The depths of this sombre world are shut from our further view. Its numberless passages, and ranges of interminable chambers, may add to the dignity of our Egyptian-like mode of sepulture. By Serapis, the lord of the dead, time is no more for us! We are already dwellers in the abyss of eternity! The 'winged globe' floats tremulously through the murky ether, bearing our names inscribed upon its luminous surface."

The Philosopher was too dejected to reply to this sally. A deep sigh alone testified his chagrin. "Cheer up, brother," continued the Antiquary, "any thing is better than 'those terrible dreams!' What, indeed, says *Macbeth* on the same point?

> 'But let
> The frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
> Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
> In the affliction of *those terrible dreams*,
> That shake us nightly.'

"Who knows but that old Hreggvidarnautr himself may come to relieve us? Ha! by heaven, what was that? Methought I caught the faint glimmer of his white, flowing robe. No; it is a ray of flickering, pallid light, issuing through some small far-off crevice.

Lo! yonder, in the direction from which those strange noises seem to proceed!"

Their alarm and uneasiness now by degrees subsided; and they could in a short time bear the painful necessity of communicating their thoughts as to the best method of extricating themselves from the difficulty and danger that surrounded them. At length, after sundry prayers to the "holy and ever-virgin Mother of God," half-audibly muttered by Dr. Dánskiölldr, and a few scarcely-stifled maledictions on "that scurvy jade, Fortune," on the part of his less devout associate, the former proposed that they should guide their further course by groping along the walls, and deliberately testing the floor with their mattocks, while making an essay to reach the distant, faintly-twinkling ray of light alluded to. To this suggestion Sir Ernest assented; observing, by way of encouragement, that, inasmuch as the worthy Skald had promised to be with them, "though unseen," it was probable that he would more immediately take advantage of this interval of darkness, to offer his necessary service. They accordingly proceeded, but with additional caution, and with slow, hesitating steps. Having explored their way to the extremity of the passage, each examining the wall along which he advanced, in the hope of discovering some new and commodious means of continuing their route, they simultaneously arrived at a couple of doors immediately opposite each other. To open either was the

work of an instant. The one conducted to some apartment veiled in utter darkness: the other gave access to a vast, dimly-lighted, vaulted stable, filled with majestic steeds in superb accoutrements, whose stamping hoofs had doubtless occasioned the previous disturbance noticed by the Antiquary. The light, before remarked, proceeded also from the source now reached.

One fierce-looking, crop-eared roan, of gigantic height, more splendidly trapped and adorned than the rest, and whose housing exhibited the frequent device of the couchant "Dragon," wrought in gold, was probably the favourite charger of King Askew himself. The next stall contained a fine Arabian, the gift, perhaps, of the gallant Roman Count, Gradinego. An ordinary little pie-bald pony, with a hog-mane, garnished with fantastic trappings of every hue, and distinguished also by silver bells depending from its ear-caps, stood in a near recess on the opposite side, and represented doubtless the steed of the reader's old acquaintance, Bumbur the Jester.

Our adventurers now succeeded in dissipating the residue of their late apprehensions; and, as they re-lighted their torches at a curious bronze lamp, the pattern of which (like that of King Wichtlaf's crucibolum), exhibited "fierce vine-dressers fighting with dragons," they re-imbibed also large draughts of renewed courage. "Floreat Amarantus!" was the motto again on either lip.

On approaching the stalls of several of the noble horses, they observed that each occupant was in a state of slumbering half-consciousness; from which it seemed vainly to seek relief, by occasionally tossing back its scarlet-braided mane, lashing its sides with its amply-flowing tail, and pawing the far-resounding pavement with its spark-emitting hoofs.

Looming through the dim obscurity of the long vista, appeared a lofty door, surmounted with a pair of elk's horns, of prodigious magnitude. Our heroes proceeded to examine this massive barrier, which they found secured by numerous fastenings, prohibiting a further advance. Having failed in their endeavour to overcome the resistance afforded by these obstacles, they agreed to return, and prosecute their search in the direction indicated by the door on the opposite side of the passage which they had lately left.

The chamber now discovered contained nothing remarkable; but, on penetrating into the apartment beyond, which was provided with a huge iron door of enormous strength, now left ajar, they beheld a sight which shook their nerves with resistless violence. It was the prison, or, perhaps, only one of the prisons, of this subterranean abode; and, stretched on the ground, on either side of the long, low, vaulted chamber, was a diversified crowd of miserable captives, chained to huge rings of iron fixed in the walls. A squalid mat, or an armful of loose straw, served the purpose of seat and bed, through the undistinguished hours of day

and night; while two large iron lamps, and three brass sconces, spread around a sickly, vaporous light, which rendered the odious office of exposing more fully that scene of intense misery and suffering to the aching sight of the hopeless inmates. Such, rather, had been the effect of those dull, melancholy rays, ere the sudden spell of Nyradur closed in friendly darkness the eyes of each forlorn mourner.

Here was an aged and feeble form, whose deeply-furrowed brow and emaciated cheek, whose tattered raiment and long-matted locks, bespoke a depth of wretchedness, from which the shuddering gazer involuntarily turned away his glance, seeking to banish from his mind the unavailing regret which it awakened, but vainly endeavouring to efface the recollection of such extreme affliction. There, a very child, with its little limbs manacled, its pale cheek wet with tears—the sob of unutterable anguish still rising from its sleeping bosom, presented a strange and touching contrast.

But the greater part of these unhappy beings were evidently of the most degraded class, and of wild, reckless, barbarian, and blood-thirsty habits. Some of them wore still the armour in which they had probably fought their last field; and, as they from time to time struck their iron-sheathed breasts with their fettered arms, in fits of occasional excitement, as agitated, doubtless, by dreams of quarrel or fight, they caused the dismal sounds of alarm that had blended

with the wild clash of iron hoofs, from the neighbouring stable.

Passing leisurely through these ranks of misery, impressed with the most painful emotions, and indulging a reproachful sentiment widely derogating from their former homage to the "high-battled" chief, our friends at length reached the termination of the dismal recess. And here a new incident of kindred inhumanity awaited them. A wild group of military retainers, superintended by an officer, clothed and accoutred like the previously-seen commander of the guard, were assembled to inflict punishment on a beautiful youth of eighteen, whose showy attire, and long-ringletted hair, twisted with gold, whose remarkably-fair complexion, and delicately-moulded frame, evinced a rank considerably above the vulgar. The hapless victim (we will not say culprit) was partially stripped (in morem scholasticum), and hoisted on the shoulders of a robust, giant-like trooper. The terrible birch-rod, destined to supply the torture, was raised, with a jerking flourish in the air, as if to add mockery to the fears of its insulting menace; while its elastic motion and truculent aspect gave for a moment the idea of a sentient participation of the weapon itself in the cruel purpose of assault. In its bushy plenitude, in the quaint and half-burlesque fearfulness of its uncouth nature, in the dark and knotted ruggedness of each crooked yet closely-twining twig, and in the peculiar adaptation of its rough, spike-abounding,

sharp-edged, hard-budded, wiry and flexible fibres to the barbarous method of punishment which custom has retained to the present day in our various schools, may be traced an ingenious refinement of malice, that does honour to the first discoverer of its superior capability for inflicting pain, who could scarcely have been instructed by Pluto himself in the adoption of a more exquisite and revolting mode of torment.

The black, impetuously-brandished, and roughly-bristling birch, we say, contrasting with the whitely-shining smoothness of the devoted object of its wrath,

'So white, so soft, so delicate, so sleek,'

quivered in the executioner's eager grasp, and, as it toyed with the air during the few moments of preparatory elevation, its harshly-whispering sound seemed to bespeak a delight in the meditated task of unsparing violence. It appeared to exult fiercely in the cruelly-intended measure of hostility, as thirsting for the crimson drops that should so soon be called forth by its supply-embracing, quickly-penetrative, and envenomed sprigs, as they descended in multiplied points of infliction, on the full proportions of delicately-white and polished flesh that distinguished the finely-formed, health-invigorated, person of the youthful sufferer. The moment had at length arrived—the fatal moment—when the first impending stroke was about to take effect, with all the severity which the muscular and well-accustomed arm of a stalwart

vardhalldsmadr could exert. A feeling of impatient curiosity—a breathless interest, was depicted in the airs and attitudes of the crowded circle of spectators. All eyes were rivetted with stern attention, not unmixed (hear it, ye schoolmasters who delight in flagellation!) with a sort of satyrine expression of unnatural and hideous pleasure, on the fresh, finely-grained, and snow-enamelled skin of the ill-fated prey; on that daintily-polished skin whose excessive fairness and delicacy seemed to clothe with an instinct of added modesty those chaste reserves of the person which were thus wantonly and ignominiously subjected to the brutal gaze of the surrounding beholders. A look of savage delight glared in the broad ugly visage of the minister of punishment, as he calculated the chosen point of infliction, and the exact impetus of the stroke; while the pallid features of the expectant victim of this carnal sensuality (see Captain Marryatt's many allusions to the too often disguised character of this description of torture) were agitated with the terrors of approaching anguish, as he tremblingly winced, and struggled, and writhed, and vainly sought to resist the cruel and loathsomely-indecent aggression; when, thanks, great thanks to the spell of the Nibelunglandic sorcerer, the alarmed patient and the ruthless operator were alike deprived of their anticipated share of the appointed performance; thus realizing, in respect to the passive party, the memorable saying,— "'Tis an ill wind that blows nobody any good!"

Ladies of England! ye who in fact rule the destinies of domestic life, petition, in these days of general reform, for the abolition of the barbarous and degrading practice of corporal punishment in our schools—a practice alike revolting to sense and decency. Petition! gentle ladies, petition! Your all-pervading influence in the sphere of domestic interests must ensure you success!

Glad to escape from a scene of abject despair and of brutal, if not lascivious, cruelty, our worthy adventurers hailed with satisfaction the small grated door which permitted their transit beyond the sphere of such depressing influences. The "Burgonet of men,"—the "Jupiter,"—the "Atlas," of Sir Ernest's enthusiastic admiration, was, after all, not quite the *sui generis* sort of hero he had indulgently pictured; but a rude enough warrior, strongly affected with the prejudices and feelings of the iron throng around him.

"The device on yonder stable-lamp, representing a conflict between fierce vine-dressers and dragons," observed Sir Ernest, "brings to my mind a thousand curious legendary traditions concerning those fabulous creatures. It has always appeared to me a matter of great probability, Dr. Dánskiölldr, that the crocodile afforded the first idea of the dragon of romance. And this opinion seems confirmed by a passage in the prophet Micah, chap. i. v. 8.—'Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls.'

It is noticed of the crocodile, that its cry resembles that of the human voice in the accents of lamentation. The form of the ideal monster, in its main characteristics, corresponds, also, with some degree of closeness, with that of the crocodile, namely, in the prodigiously-extending mouth, with hideous rows of teeth; the impenetrable coat of mail environing its body, its fiery, projecting eyes, webbed feet, and gigantic trunk. The description of the crocodile in the book of Job, chap. xli. v. 1-34, affords an exact likeness of the imaginary monster of the mythic and romantic records. 'His teeth are terrible round about. His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal. One is so near another, that no air can come between them. They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered. By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out. Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or cauldron. His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth. In his neck remaineth strength. The flakes of his flesh are joined together; they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved. His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone. When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid. The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the sword, the dart, nor the habergeon. He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood.

The arrow cannot make him flee: sling-stones are turned with him into stubble. Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear. Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp-pointed things upon the mire. Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear.' In the Old Testament we find the crocodile mentioned under the name of leviathan, which word is compounded of lavah, coupled, and ten, a dragon. The compound leviathan, the 'coupled dragon,' denotes an animal partaking of the nature, both of land serpents and fishes, and, in the book of Job, chap. xli., signifies the crocodile, which lives as well under water as on shore. I need not observe, that (mind the current of air, brother, lest the torches be again extinguished) I say, I need not remark, that the Oriental origin of the descendants of Odin clearly accounts for their mythic belief respecting the dragon; a creature so evidently identifiable with the leviathan of Southern Asia."

CHAPTER XII.

MORE MARVELS.

> 3 GENT. If ever truth were pregnant by circumstance; that which you hear, you'll swear you see, *there is such unity in the proofs.*
>
> *Winter's Tale,* Act v. sc. 2.

OUR modern knights-errant now entered, through the instrumentality of their master-key, a spacious store-house, filled with huge bales of merchandise, and with chests and packages, of every variety of size and shape; with which were, also, mingled barrels of pitch, planks, tools, masts, ropes, cables, grappling-irons, chains, anchors, oars, sail-cloth, windlasses, rudders (the latter engraved with runes), and a thousand miscellaneous articles of sea-faring use. One solitary iron lamp, yielding a green, smoky light, and casting strange shadows through the vaulted room, gave a highly-picturesque effect to the chaötic assemblage of dark and rude objects around. Amidst this confused heap of stores, that perplexed the eye with its strange combination of quantity and variety, were dispersed a few warlike engines, resembling the balis-

tas and catapults of the Romans; as well as sundry instruments of torture, including rowelled whips, spiked collars, racks, and thumb-screws; while, frowning, in conspicuous horror, amid the dark display, was a gigantic 'dragon's' head, of most malign and truculent aspect, that glared a seeming challenge from its projecting eye-balls; or, otherwise exhibited an expression of scornful marvel, that our heroes should have presumed to intrude themselves into that treasure-heaped, and strongly-guarded, chamber. On approaching it more nearly, the Antiquary discovered that it was the figure-head of a galley; and not, as he had previously imagined, a colossal shield, appertaining to the 'hugeous and broad-fronted' Askew himself. It was covered with plates of burnished gold; the eyes were formed of precious stones; the teeth of ivory; and the tongue of red gold.

"This is, probably, a relic of the 'Long Serpent,'" observed the delighted enthusiast, "and it reminds me of the stately show of maritime chivalry, described by the poet—

> 'Eastward sail the ships of war;
> The graven bucklers gleam afar,
> And *Dragons'-heads* adorn the prows of gold.'"

Beside it stood erect an amply-filled sack, into which Sir Ernest's excited curiosity tempted him to gaze; when, in lieu of the rare evidences of the Saxon coinage which he anxiously hoped to find, the dismal spectacle of a crowd of human heads, male

and female, with their long, gold-twisted locks of flaxen hue, clotted with gore, and mingled with the right hands, decorated with massy rings, of other unfortunate victims, burst upon the awe-struck vision of himself and his associate, and chilled the very current of their blood. Hurriedly concealing the horrid mass of mutilation, and uttering sundry exclamations of " Teunder and blitzen!" " Der Teufel!" " Parlasembleu! " " Sacrée Mère de Ciel! " " Alack for pity! " " A sorry sight," &c. &c., they abruptly terminated their examination of the remaining objects.

" ' Coragio, camerado mio,' " whispered the Chevalier Dánskiölldr, " I trust that more agreeable sights are in store for us. ' Onward! ' be the motto."

" Nay, brother," replied the Antiquary, looking somewhat less pale than before, " I faint not from the purpose; albeit, one had need of nerves and joints of steel to proceed to the issue." Recovering his courage in a moment or two, he added, with a smile, " En route, monsieur, je ne demande pas mieux! "

Perceiving an inner door at the extremity of the room, they advanced in that direction, and were next admitted into a magazine of arms, the walls of which were tastefully embellished with trophies comprising suits and detached pieces of armour of various descriptions, and the most beautiful specimens of each kind of weapon—

> " Glittering shields of purest white,
> And swords, and Danish falchions bright."

Here were axes and axe-hammers, square-backed, bulge-headed, boat-shaped, or knob-headed; spears with trilateral, or heart-shaped heads; daggers with or without guards, and with two, three, or four edges; and knives of bone, flint, or hornstone. Hauberks and breast-plates, helmets and shields, bows and sheafs of arrows, were collected together in countless profusion. These the Antiquary curiously examined; and, forgetful amid its 'pomp and circumstance,' of the horrors of war, commented upon with great delight and eloquence, chiding his companion's impatience to press onward. "'Festina lentè!' good master doctor," he cried; "make no more haste than good speed. 'Odd 's bodikin, who but a 'thrice-double ass' would pass unviewed such treasures as these? Marry, if I knew that I was only dreaming of such gems of rare curiosity, I would not awake for a broad principality! Here are the 'grey shirts' and the 'masked helmets,' sung of in the Skaldic odes. Behold the 'mail coat,' the 'war-net sewed by the skill of the armourer.' Here, too, are the 'dense shields,' the 'horn bows,' and the 'heap of war-shafts;' the 'javelins ashwood grey above, with the iron crowd glorious upon the weapons.' Here are the 'hoods of mail,' told of in the Norrhæne and Icelandic sagas; the 'best of war-shrouds,' the 'body-shirts hard, and locked by the hand;' the 'war-dresses twisted with gold, variegated, and hardened in the fire.' Here are the 'war-bills,' the 'large

battle-swords,' the 'sheer, cross sword, in its edges tried;' the 'mill-sharpened blades;' the 'blades strengthened by the embrace of flame!' Now for an old strophe from the Quida (21) of Ragnar Lodbrok:—

> 'We hewed with swords!
> Hard came the storm on our shields,
> Dead they fell down on the earth,
> In Northumberland.
> None, on that morning,
> Needed men to incite.
> For Bellona's sharp sport,
> The glittering sword split the steel-capped skull,
> The moon-round shield saw I broken,
> And thus men's lives were lost.'"

The Antiquary, excited by the dazzling array of blades and shields and banners around him, continued to harangue in eloquent terms, his unwilling hearer.

"The insatiable lust of plunder," he observed, "and the wild spirit of enterprise that marked the character of the Danish warrior—his stern love of battle equalling the loftiest enthusiasm of the 'heroic age'—his impassioned homage to female worth and beauty, as disclosed in the interchange of domestic and social sympathies between members of the same tribe, and the savage dignity of his roving and adventurous existence, with its alternating scenes of peril and triumph, and the never-failing resolution it exhibited under misfortune or defeat, constituted a mixed and strange association of noble and debasing qualities, that, taken in the aggregate, were not un-

calculated to excite emotions of admiration, more particularly when beheld through the extenuating channel of contemporary necessity, in an age when the arts of life were little understood; and while yet the acts of society were governed rather by the influence of superior might, than the acknowledged restraint of legal or moral obligation. Much of the aggressive cruelty imputed to his nature, was also ascribable to the dark and hereditary hatred which he bore towards the enemies of his ancient faith—the contemners of his revered Thor and Odin; while his perpetual thirst for the savage horrors of warfare might be traced to the same source of religious agency—namely, the belief that he who died bravely fighting the battles of his people, was immediately admitted to the transcendent joys of the immortal Valhall, with its glorious assemblage of beautiful houris—its exhibition of warlike pastimes—the never-ending pleasures of the banquet, and the lofty converse of the heroic and dignified founders of his race.

'I hear them call
Who bid me hence to Odin's hall:
High seated in their blest abodes,
Soon shall I quaff the drink of Gods!'

"Nor must it be overlooked, my friend, that the elevation of the deceased warrior's seat at the mead-board, in this Pagan paradise, depended on the number of enemies that he had killed. Hence, doubtless, King Ubbo, or Hubba (whose name seems the origin

of the 'terriculamenta infantum'—the cabalistic nursery-sign used by mothers in stilling their children—'Hubba! bo! bo!'), slew with his own hand the abbot and all the monks of Medeshamstede (Peterborough), on the irruption of the Danes into Mercia in 870; a feat which would give him a strong additional claim to precedency at the banquet table of Odin. His act might also, in a great measure, I opine, be instigated by a desire to revenge the cruel tortures and assassination of his father, the renowned Ragnar Lodbrok, or 'Hairy Breeches,' by Ella of Northumbria; since, amongst this brave but barbarous people, revenge, well I wot, was considered honourable. Odin himself is characterized as the 'Terrible and Severe God,' the 'Father of Carnage,' the 'Avenger!' In estimating human actions, my good and worthy friend, the true philosopher will always allow a just share of consideration to the motive forming the principle of the act; and, whether the act be good or evil, he will separate the essential differences which it may present, and determine its qualification accordingly. Thus, many traits of bright and picturesque colouring might be associated with the wild and shadowy groupings that constitute the varied portraiture of the Dane. And let it ever be recollected, brother, that the accounts which we English readers have received of this Nomadic and enterprising people were written by the Saxon monks, their *professed enemies.* Well I wist that the ancient writers of your own

country, Denmark, speak of the deeds of their wild Hyperborean ancestry in terms of greater leniency than the chronicles of our early English historians."

To these doubtless instructive, but perhaps rather unseasonable remarks, Professor Dánskiölldr turned an unwilling, or, it may be, a deaf ear; and, seizing the first opportunity of a pause in his learned companion's discourse, he again urged, and not unsuccessfully, the necessity of their prompt attention to the more important objects of their search. They accordingly proceeded, still more deeply impressed with the extraordinary realization of their meditated discovery.

Lateral passages, apparently of vast extent, many of which were distinguished by long stairs hewn out of the rock, excited their passing observation; as they continued to thread what appeared to be the main line of advance through the interminable maze of this singularly constructed cavern-castle. Hollow ceaseless reverberations, produced by means unknown, called forth from time to time a shuddering sensation; suggesting that this wild and strange region was the abode of unearthly inhabitants; and still and anon the echoes arising from the footsteps of the excited explorers, as repeated from arch to arch and wall to wall in a startling and novel manner, gave the idea of approaching danger. To this vague sense of alarm the solemn effect produced by the wreaths of driving mist that hovered around, added an impressive feature amid the gloom of their mysterious situation.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BATH OF BEAUTY.

Her shrine where *naked Venus* keeps.

POPE.

A native grace
Sat fair proportion'd on her polished limbs.

THOMSON.

Her form was fresher than the morning rose,
When the dew wets its leaves ; unstain'd, and pure,
As is the lily or the mountain snow.

Idem.

Never, I never view'd till this blest hour
Such finish'd grace ! I gaze and I adore !

POPE'S HOMER'S *Odyssey.*

OUR chivalric "protégés" of Swedish royalty, the court-caressed favourites of Charles XII., now passed up and down steep narrow stairs, along numberless passages, and through a series of spacious, and, for for the most, richly-furnished chambers—

"—*Chambers* full of paraments,
Of rich beddis, and of ornamentis,"—

observing, however, nothing of sufficient interest to detain their attention. The air of this interminable

labyrinth gradually became purer and warmer; though, by what process of ventilation and temperature such agreeable change was effected, eluded their attempt at discovery. At length, as fortune directed, they came to a small but lofty room, fitted up with a still greater attention to elegance than any of the apartments which they had visited. In the centre was a spacious, cylindrically-shaped basin, or cistern, formed of Thebaic marble, sometimes called Oriental, and sometimes Egyptian granite, and paved with jasper; the same being constructed as a lavatory, with pipes and other apparatus for the due regulation of its supplies of heat. A minute pair of delicate-looking slippers, lined with white fur and trimmed with silver, indicated sufficiently, had other evidence been wanting, that this retiring-room was devoted to the occasional use of one of the softer sex; while the costly nature of these and other memorials bespoke also the rank of its customary visitant.

On an oblong pedestal enriched with gold, situate within an alcove supported by Ionic columns of red porphyry, reclined, in all the pride of consummate and dazzling beauty, the unveiled form of a "Venus Sleeping." The rich, creamy tone of the marble of Paros, in which the figure was executed, derived a singular and suitable relief from the cold, greenish-white tint of the marble of Mount Pentelicus composing the pedestal; and so illusive was the effect produced by this local distinction of colour, and the

natural expression imparted by the sculptor's skill, that our Adventurers paused, with simultaneous emotion, fearing that they had unguardedly intruded themselves on the more retired privacy of some beautiful female, who, on reposing from the exercise of the bath, and ere yet she taxed her languid exertions to re-attire herself, had been suddenly accosted by that all-visiting sleep which condemned the inmates of this devoted castle to so long and dreary an imprisonment. After the lapse of a moment or two, they discovered their error; and, thus reassured, proceeded to indulge their legitimate curiosity in a close survey of the more interesting contents of this luxurious apartment.

"By the lily of Saint Antony!" exclaimed Sir Ernest, "I trembled lest we had surprised the illustrious Cariberta herself in the somewhat unprepared performance of her involuntary share of the grand 'siesta'—

> 'In naked beauty more adorn'd,
> More lovely than Pandora, whom the Gods
> Endow'd with all their gifts;'

but, 'crede mihi,' it is well that we have escaped so alarming a peril. 'Benedicamus Domino!' For, if the Northern chivalry of the high-hearted Askew was so powerfully subdued by a first sight of that peerless beauty, when habited in her garments of 'flowered silver,' and encumbered with the sweeping robes of royalty, what must have been our fate, brother, had the lovely apparition made herself visible in the

'juste-au-corps' of Nature's own exquisite designing, and revealed to us a 'corsage' glowing with all the dazzling excess of unborrowed radiance that springs from Beauty's sun-like dower!

'Like blooming Eve
In nature's young simplicity, and blushing
With wonder at creation's opening glow.'"

Upon a nearer approach to the interesting statue, the worthy Antiquary discovered, on its pedestal, a plate of Corinthian bronze, bearing, in silver letters, a Latin inscription, in Alcaic verse, which might have borne the following paraphrase:—

VENUS SLEEPING.

"Procul, ô procul este, profani!"

"'Neath the broad umbrage of an ancient tree,
Whose moss-grown branches o'er a shelving bank
Descending spread their curtained privacy,
Fair Venus in the sultry noontide sank,
Tempted by gentle languor to repose
Her beauteous form amid the fresh wild flowers,
That from the shadowy turf luxuriant rose,
And filled with odours sweet those sylvan bowers.

Hard by, a crystal brook, of radiance clear,
Its glittering bubbles poured in endless play;
Whose soft wild murmurs stole upon the ear,
Blent with the cadence of the woodland lay,
That sang of Summer's pomp, and earth's rich joy,
While o'er each sense a gladdening rest was breath'd—
A halcyon calm, and Slumber, drawing nigh,
Waved her light wand with roseate visions wreathed.

"So Venus slept—each snowy limb reclined
In free, habitual grace: one rounded arm
Beneath her drooping head lay soft-confined—
A radiant pillow, fraught with soothing charm!
Couched its fair twin beside, in buoyant ease,—
No envious robe her tender shape concealed;
But with gay, furtive bliss, the enamoured breeze
Claimed each fond prize of beauty's dazzling field!

"Her locks of shadowy gold, loose-floating, hung
In rich luxuriance o'er her polished neck;
A pearly light across her brow was flung,
And her veiled eyes did silken lashes deck:
Ripe glowed her pouting lip, while o'er her cheek
A trembling blush oft fitfully arose,
As, through each dimpled smile, a glimpse would break
Of some sweet fancy kindling in repose!

"Swelled her soft bosom's undulating space,
As fervid dreams their moving spell supplied;
And oft a rapturous sigh's disturbing trace
With heightened beauty crowned its blissful tide.
Thus slept she, 'mid that sylvan solitude,
Whose wild oaks seemed to stretch their sinewy arms
To guard her slumbers from each access rude,
And veil with watchful care her matchless charms."

"This should be the goddess Freia, the Scandinavian Venus (22)," observed the Chevalier Dánskiölldr, whose attention had not yet been engaged by the inscription which Sir Ernest Oldworthy was silently perusing; "and yet I was little prepared to expect such admirable sculpture from the ancient artists of the north. Parlasanguienne! that daintily-moulded bust,—

'Its emblem the meek lily of the stream,
Rising and falling with the unstable flood,'

and those inimitably-turned limbs, which, with their delicate polish and rounded softness, seem wrought but to excite the veneration of the gods themselves, could never have existed in the imagination, or models, of a Danish or Saxon sculptor of the ninth century!"

"You would rather say, brother," replied the Antiquary, "that the degree of skill possessed by the early northern artists was incompetent to produce so consummate a display of grace and beauty as that before us: since we cannot doubt that nature has been equally lavish of her charms in all ages; and the loveliness of the 'fair-haired daughters of the north' was ever the theme of loftiest exultation in the songs of the skald, the minnesinger, the trouveur, and the troubadour, of the continent; and of the bard, the gleeman, and the minstrel, of Britain. In sooth, mon frère, I may confess that the grace and gentle feeling, the chastity and noble courage, so habitually blended with, and heightening the majestic beauty and dignified worth of the Scandinavian females, had its due share of influence in unlocking the gates of my spirit in favour of their piratical countrymen; and that the charms of an Alfhilda, a Thora, or an Aslauga, spread a sunny and healing lustre over the darker delinquencies of their bold and savage brethren. Yes—the memory of the beautiful daughter of Sigurdr, King of the Ostrogoths, so famous for her chastity and heroism, casts a bright stream of glory through the night of ages! And, in

like manner, do the rare endowments of form and mind, and the high-souled intrepidity and devotedness of affection, possessed by the lovely and affectionate wives of that renowned and kingly warrior, Ragnar Lodbrok, the Mars of northern chivalry, shed a splendour of dazzling and heroic colouring over the page that records their fame. Their names will ever dwell, like stars of kindred holiness, shedding a glad, auspicious light over the clouded horizon of Gothic barbarism!"

The practised eye of Sir Ernest Oldworthy had discovered, at a glance, the Grecian original of the beautiful statue, and even the particulur school of art to which it belonged (namely, that of Praxiteles, who excelled more than any other sculptor of antiquity in the voluptuous grace and delicacy of his figures), and, after repeating the names of a few of the more eminent artists, whose works referred themselves to the era and style in question (amongst which, that of Scopas was most conspicuously mentioned), he fell into an enthusiastic reverie; in which the Philosopher himself seemed also disposed to indulge his teeming admiration of the exquisite and life-like model.

> "Another Freya—Aphrodité termed,
> If right I ween, in Græcia's classic phrase."

Cheated by the intensity of his delight into a momentary belief that the object of his survey was endued with sentience, Sir Ernest at length ejaculated, with trembling emotion,—

"Speak, thou charming wonder!—thou to whom I may address the sweet words of Ovid, so descriptive of thyself—

'Mollior et cygni plumis, et lacte coacto,'

or the still more forcible expressions of the elegant Petronius, as combined in one of his most delicately-voluptuous passages—

'Candida
Quæ bene superas lac, et lilium,
Albamque simul rosam—
Et expolitum ebur Indicum,'

or the deliciously-quaint and closely-expressive language of our own reverend Chaucer—

'fairer to be seen
Than is lilly upon the stalk green,
And fresher than May with flowers new.'

Speak, thou bright divinity! Oh, tell me, with thine own sweet voice and language, for both, I ween, are 'musical as is Apollo's lute,' under what spell of celestial enchantment was realised so disturbing—so bewildering a dream of unimaginable beauty!"

A soft, seraphic smile, that appeared to vary with the fitful light of the extended torch, was the brief, mysterious reply.

Having vainly endeavoured to exhaust their admiration of the exquisite symmetry and refined grace of this Parian marvel, they forced away, rather than withdrew their gaze, to examine the crowd of varied

objects disposed, in pleasing disarray, around them. A drinking-glass composed of the yellow amber of Pomerania, a small beaker, of onyx, and a richly-chased hand-bell, of gold, were deposited on an elaborately and most fancifully-embossed salver of silver, and bore their united evidence to the taste and wealth of her who had adopted such rare and costly acquisitions, as articles of ordinary use.

Here was displayed the furniture of a *toilette*, with its combs of ivory, its ebony brushes inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and provided with gilded bristles, that owed their value to the choiceness of the material, being derived from the wild boar of Neustria; its gorgeously-framed *speculum* of polished silver; and its numerous *petits vases* and vials of jasper and crystal, containing the most choice aromatic productions of the East. Taking up the *speculum* and intently gazing upon it, Sir Ernest exclaimed:—

" Strange and pleasing supposition! In this very mirror, eight hundred and fifty years ago, were the lovely features of her, who bore the far-famed title of the 'Flower and Pearl of Neustria,' most certainly reflected; for behold, brother, the delightful evidence of the fact afforded by the name of 'Cariberta,' inscribed upon the ring which is attached to it. Oh, that the wand were mine, which should restore, though but for a moment, to its too-forgetful surface, the brightening spell that was once cast over it! How curious and delightful are the sensations which we

experience, when we gaze upon objects thus familiarly commemorative of the beings of a long past age,—when we reflect that they are probably the sole-existing relics which could be traced to their former owners' possession,—the only memorials which the devastating hand of Time has spared of all those spacious possessions which were once distinguished by their habitual notice or use. But how far more strange and affecting must prove our interest and curiosity, should it be our fate to survey the beautiful Cariberta herself, in all the freshness of those charms which clothed her, as with a garment of light, in the far distant year—876! Bewildering thought!"

The next object which attracted the attention of Sir Ernest was a superbly-decorated volume, written, of purest gold, on purple-coloured parchment, bound in silver gilt, and furnished with gemmed clasps; while the Chevalier Dánskiölldr gratified his taste in examining a golden vermiculated necklace ; curiously and elaborately chased. A multitude of other rare curiosities, and refined objects of use, supplied further testimony that mental and mannered elegance had gone hand in hand in their selection, and that a wide command of resources had suggested their acquisition. Amongst these must be recorded a silver rood, or crucifix, which attracted the Antiquary's notice through the extreme beauty which it possessed as a work of art. Its interest was, however, tenfold enhanced, when, on a minute examination of its various parts,

the mystery of the chamber, as regarded its former appropriation, was further elucidated. On the back of the transverse limb of the cross was engraved, in the Frankish tongue :—" Cariberta ordered me to be made." This inscription Sir Ernest pointed out to his companion, remarking that a jewel of gold, enamelled like a *bulla*, or amulet, to hang round the neck, circumscribed, in Anglo-Saxon,—" Ælfred meg heht gewyrcan," " Alfred ordered me to be made," was found in the island of Athelney, and subsequently deposited in the Ashmolean Museum.

" This apartment," he continued, " was probably, nay, assuredly, a place of retirement, where the lovely Queen, withdrawn from the tumultuous scenes of the banquet and the revel, could solace her calmer feelings, and more cultivated tastes, in the indulgence of religious meditation, literary enquiries, musical studies, or other intellectual pursuits; while the favourite practice of bathing (23) would, at such times, furnish a suitable plea of absence. Here, to use a graphic speech of Spenser:—

> ' Her angel face,
> As the great eye of heaven, shyned bright,
> And made a sunshine in the shady place.' "

Taking a prolonged and still more interested survey of that soft retreat of peerless beauty and regal dignity, and once more casting a lingering eye on the radiant development of those tender graces, which shed so delicate and chaste an air of repose on the

marble slumbers of the "divine Aphrodité," they at length, with unabated reluctance, compelled themselves to quit the fascinating chamber, and pursue their investigation of the remaining wonders of this vast subterranean fabric.*

* And now, worthy and kind reader, in order to prevent an expected objection which some critics might allege against the exhibition of splendid objects of art introduced in the narrative of events referring to an age of such, generally-understood simplicity and rudeness as that of the Saxon epoch under review, I may here take leave to observe that I have not represented the existence of one single article, in these pages, which may not be traced in the works of the several historians who treat of the era in question; or which may not be fairly supposed to survive as the relics of an earlier period. Indeed, it is on the general fidelity of my details of this nature, as illustrative of the historical bearings of the subject, that I pledge my character and seek my reputation as an Antiquary.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE POMPS OF OLD.

At length they came into a larger space.

SPENSER.

Roofs of fretted gold,
Rais'd on a thousand pillars wreath'd around
With laurel foliage, and with *eagles* crown'd.

POPE.

THE course of our chivalric companions through the inextricable maze of apartments constituting this extraordinary dwelling, subsequently led them into a wide gallery or arcade, which the eye of either party readily discovered to be of Roman original. The pavement exhibited a superb pattern, composed of black, white, red, and yellow tesseræ, which corresponded, in general arrangement, with the rich frescos of the ceiling. The vast extent of columned walls was illuminated with numerous shell-formed lamps, with shades of semi-transparent glass, that shed a pearly delicious light through the beautiful vista. It would be difficult to describe the combination of perspective effects—the scenic and novel details, abounding with prodigality of colouring, and diversity of character,

that stamped a commanding interest—a dignity apart from showiness, on this curiously developed scene of ancient pomp. Between each column, which was of the Ionic order, and of that beautiful and rare *breccia*, the *verde antico*, praised by Pliny, was a niche with an elaborately-carved rilievo above, enshrining, strangely enough, the effigy of a Danish warrior "in his mail coat, hard and hand-locked," who seemed to look round with guardian vigilance, as challenging all that approached that august locality. Sir Ernest Oldworthy's well-instructed and scrutinizing eye soon assured him that the display of warlike trappings thus afforded was realized at the expense of a far richer and nobler exhibition; and that statues of the rarest cost and estimation, both of Roman and Greek sculpture, were concealed beneath the quaint disguises so grotesquely appended by the latter occupants of those princely halls. That he now trod the majestic interior of one of the ancient palaces of Repandunum (doubtless the *regia* of the president, or the princely abode of the *comes* of the province), was a fact which could not be deemed uncertain; and he partook of all the delightful emotion—the rapturous exultation, which so wildly-strange an adventure was calculated to excite in the mind of one so ardently venerating the remains of antiquity as himself.

Pursuing the route of this lengthened avenue, and, at every moment, observing fresh objects of wonder and admiration, they soon afterwards reached a grand

staircase, consisting of several flights of green marble steps, adorned with iron balusters, finely wrought and profusely gilt. Ascending its noble range, they observed, with equal gratification and surprise, that the walls retained, in the highest state of perfection, the exquisite specimens of early fresco painting, which enriched them. In various compartments were represented subjects, derived from the "Metamorphoses of Ovid." The story of "Phaëthon," was exhibited through a series of these interesting designs. In one he was depicted as petitioning Apollo, for leave to drive the chariot of the sun. A second presented the transformation of Phaëthon's sisters into poplars; their tears distilling, as amber from the trees. In a third, was portrayed the fate of Cycnus, King of Liguria, who, being inconsolable for Phaëthon's death, was changed into a swan.

Our adventurers now approached, with feelings of deepened astonishment and awe, a spacious and lofty vestibule (24), or cryptic entrance-hall, forming the chief, or grand approach, to this vast subterranean palace. Here, a considerable number of cressets, affixed to the walls, and emitting differently-coloured flame, produced a curiously-solemn and illusive effect (25).

"Verily," quoth the Antiquary, "am I reminded of Taliesin's 'Preidden Annwn,' or the 'Spoils of Annwn:'—

'And before the passage of the gate of Uffern (26),
The *horns of light* were burning!'"

This magnificent apartment was supported by variegated marble pillars, of the Corinthian order, with sumptuously-gilded capitals, and bases; the shafts of which, its present warlike, and, as it seemed, splendour-loving inhabitants had decorated with superb armorial trophies, consisting of ancient Roman bucklers and shields, magnificently embossed, and studded with gems. The floor was distinguished by a graceful pattern of flowers, constructed of small, square, tesseræ, of various colours. Round it was a border of enriched framework, of about a foot broad, within which were several ornaments, encirled with wreaths, curiously interlaced; and in the middle of the pavement, encircled with similar wreaths, was the grand colossal figure of an equestrian warrior, in whose features the Antiquary identified those of the Emperor Gallienus. The walls were decorated with niches, surmounted by rich rilievos, and containing a series of brass bustos, amongst which might be readily recognized those of Pindar, Theophrastus, Sophocles, and Philemon. They now directed their gaze to the splendid dome, on whose several parts were portrayed, as supported by the winds, the signs of the Zodiac, with an enriched border, consisting of baskets of flowers, beautifully disposed; while at each corner were the elements of earth, air, fire, and water, expressed by cornua copiæ, birds, zephyrs, flaming censers, water-nymphs, with fishes ; and a variety of other representations characteristic of each element.

Within a circular compartment, forming the centre of the dome, was painted the story of "Jupiter and Europa;" and a magnificent gilt chandelier of twelve branches, each branch terminating in a pedestal, whereon stood a figure of one of the Muses, or of the Graces (who were thus assembled to form the number of twelve), depended from a superbly-sculptured ogee, in the middle of the dome. Each of these figures was of white marble, and held an antique lamp of bronze, probably of Egyptian workmanship, the pale and serene light of which contrasted, in a singularly-impressive manner, with the variously-hued and wildly-flickering fires emanating from the cressets beneath. In the frieze of the entablature of a range of lesser columns and arches, at the extremity of the hall, was the following inscription, in gold letters:—"Magnis tamen excidit ausis!" In the centre of this truly-royal apartment were two pairs of lofty folding-doors opposite to each other, approached by semi-circular flights of white marble stairs, of seven greises, or steps. Over the enriched pediment of one of these doors, was suspended a vast sable banner, ensigned with a 'Golden Dragon;' while, to the architrave of the other, was attached a gorgeous, overhanging curtain, the embroidery of which comprised the same well-known device, similarly wrought.

Various mysterious murmurs floated, at intervals, through the half-concealed depths of this spacious locality.

"Morguienne! Monsieur le Docteur," exclaimed the Philosopher, "the grand finale of our adventure is not far distant, and yon stately motto—'Great events happen to the bold!' may well remind us to act with firmness. The door with the martial adornment above leads, doubtless, to the aula magna, or great hall-chamber of the castle, where the king and his nobles are assembled at what *was* the festive board ere the spell of the supposed enchanter (for I still cling to the general support of my old convictions) terminated its mirthful indulgence: and the curtained entrance opposite, if an inward and mysterious sort of prompting fail me not, conducts to the presence-chamber of the lovely Cariberta."

"By the fair doves of Venus," responded the Antiquary, "the very thought is delicious!

> 'Now be you blest for it!
> I'll to the *Queen*.'

Flesh and blood! make haste. 'A cripple would move less slowly to a whipping!'"

"Nay, nay," replied the Philosopher, with an affectation of peculiar calmness, "'Festina lentè!' was the motto. 'Who but a thrice-double ass would pass unviewed such treasures as these?'" And he pointed, with a solemn significance, to the shields and other objects that adorned the pillars.

"'Onward!' 'onward!' 'onward!'" shrieked rather than said the impatient Oldworthy.

"'En route, monsieur,'" remarked the now smiling Dánskiölldr, "'Je ne demand pas mieux!'"

They now threw aside their upper garments, a well as their torches and mattocks, as somewhat unmeet garb and implements to be exposed amid the pomp of palatial splendour that now surrounded them; and, summoning additional resolution to support themselves in the arduous enterprise to which they were devoted, they pursued their mysterious course of adventure, as will be faithfully reported in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

THE "FLOWER AND PEARL OF NEUSTRIA."

O rubycunde ruby and *perle* most argent,
O gyloffer gentyll and swete *flowre* delyce,
O daynte dyamounde and moost resplendent,
O doulcet blossome of a full grete pryce.

As in a dream
I see thee here, and scarce believe mine eyes!

DRYDEN.

OPENING with impatient expectation the curtained door, our gallant *confrères* of the "Amaranth" entered a brilliantly-lighted and extensive apartment, of circular form, surrounded by red porphyry columns, with gilded chapiters, that communicated with a richly-decorated and coved roof. The tesselated floor presented a pattern of elaborate and chastely-conceived design. In the centre of this gay and splendid salon, they beheld with pleasing astonishment, seven most beautiful ladies, in the flower of youth, or in the freshest ripeness of womanhood, sleeping in the graceful attitudes of wakeful animation, as exhibited at the moment when the enchanter's spell took effect. One of exquisite and far-surpassing

loveliness, whose darker hair and warmer complexion bespoke a more southern origin, lay upon a canopied couch of superb tapestry interwoven with the figures of lions, and enriched with costly furs; her fair and daintily-rounded arms embracing an infant that reclined on her gently-heaving breast—

> "Whiter than the sea-foam
> Heaved her swelling *breast*;"

while her long, black, delicately-curling tresses floated, in glossy luxuriance, over her snowy and softly-dimpled shoulders; their low-descending shadows forming a natural curtain to protect the smiling repose of her innocent charge.

> "For her own person,
> It beggared all description: she did lie
> In her pavilion (cloth of gold, of tissue),
> O'erpicturing that Venus, where we see
> The fancy out-work nature."

"This, then," exclaimed Sir Ernest, "is the unequalled 'Gem and Paragon of Perfection'—the 'Myrothetium Veneris'—the 'Gratiarum Pyxis'—the 'Quintessence of Nature's Art'—the 'Mirror of Love'—the 'Rare Phœnix of her Sex'—the 'Non-pareil of Women'—the 'Queen of Beauty'—the 'Far-famed Cariberta'—the 'Flower and Pearl of Neustria!'

> "'Move these eyes?
> Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
> Seem they in motion? Here are severed lips
> Parted with sugar breath: so sweet a bar
> Should sunder such sweet friends!'"

A tunic of dun-coloured silk, trimmed and interlaced with purple, and falling very low on either lovely shoulder, was decorated at the bosom with a golden brooch resembling some exotic fly, whose variegated wings were beautifully represented with gems. A Latin cross, formed of lucid pearls, was suspended from her whiter and more lustrous neck; and one radiant and exquisitely-tapering arm was adorned with a curious antique beah, or bracelet, of gold, engraved with Runic characters (27) and with mythic, or, perhaps, allegorical figures—

> "Wrought by Vaulund's mystic tool,
> Where heaven's high wonders shine in graphic gold:
> To that fair arm how sweetly it assorts,
> A glow-worm circled round an elf-lit stem!"

Her slender waist was confined within a singularly-shaped belt, the edges of which described the same angular form that is observable in the dancettée partition-line of heraldry; while its costly fabric sparkled with the diversified rays of the sapphire, the ruby, the diamond, and the emerald. A gunna, or gown, of silvery-grey satin, relieved by a cyrtel (28) of some transparent material embroidered in gold, and a covering-mentel (29) of crimson velvet, guarded with ermine, constituted the chief remaining features of her graceful costume. We may also point out the additional ornament of a golden head-band set with emeralds (probably the Snogöje, or "snake-eyed" crown mentioned in the "Northern Chronicles"), which im-

parted an air of more striking dignity to the rich profusion of artlessly-disposed curls that wandered so luxuriantly over her delicate bust, increasing its polished whiteness with their glossy shadows.

"Oh, for the pencil of a Raphael, a Titian, or a Leonardo da Vinci!" sighed forth the Antiquary, as he continued to gaze, in still growing admiration, on the dignified model of surpassing beauty thus leisurely submitted to his ardent contemplation. "The majestic simplicity and lofty grace," he continued; "the brilliancy of colouring and delicacy of contour, so exquisitely blended in the charms of this mortal Venus, would throw an eternal shadow over the brightest triumphs that ever graced the portraiture of female loveliness! Alas! never might the efforts of art do justice to so divine—so rapturous a subject! By our sweet lady, Saint Mary of Repingdon, the 'Queen of Heaven' and 'Lady of the Angels,' she is a miracle of unapproachable excellence—a constellation of all that is gay, tender, graceful, noble, magnificent, august!

'Kneel down, kneel down, and wonder.'

How might the delighted eye for ever peruse those delicate yet transcendently-expressive features—those glorious and unutterable graces of form which, while they dazzle and bewilder, shed such an intoxicating sweetness on the ravished sense! See, the downy freshness of that softly-pencilled cheek! The tender

shadow of those long and silken lashes! The impassioned radiance of those love-beaming eyes! Those lips of roseate perfume! That neck of swan-like beauty!

> 'Here hand in hand
> Sit paramount the Graces: here enthron'd,
> Celestial Venus, with divinest airs,
> Invites the soul to never-fading joy.'

"I may say, with my old friend Robert Burton, in his wonderful work, 'The Anatomy of Melancholy,' 'All the gracious elegies, metaphors, hyperbolicall comparisons of the best things in the world, the most glorious names; whatsoever, I say, is pleasant, amiable, sweet, grateful, and delicious, are too little for her!' And again,—'Stars, suns, moons, mettals, sweet-smelling flowers, odours, perfumes, colours, gold, silver, ivory, pearls, precious stones, snow, painted birds, doves, honey, sugar, spice, cannot express her; so soft, so tender, so radiant, sweet, so fair is she!' Oh, well may I recall, too, the gentle lay of him who sang the far-famed beauties of the peerless Matilda (30):—

> 'Were Art so curious in herselfe to know
> Thy rare perfections rightly in their kind,
> In beautie thy divinitie to shew,
> Oh, it were able to transport the mind
> Beyond the bounds by Heaven to it assigned:
> But oh, in thee, their excellence is such,
> As thought cannot ascend to, once to touch!'

Or, to borrow the words of an old dramatist,—'She

is the protocol of every perfection—the ocean of grace.' "

Sir Ernest next summoned to his recollection the passage in the "Northern Chronicles," descriptive of the charms of this "beauty of the world;" every syllable of which was strikingly confirmed by the radiant object upon which his companion and himself continued to gaze with feelings of the tenderest admiration. The quaint lines in the "King's Quhair," of James I., of Scotland, immortalizing the charms of the Lady Joanna Beaufort, afterwards married to that monarch, recurred to the Antiquary; and he repeated them aloud, with a voice that betrayed the depth of his enthusiastic emotion:—

> "Ah, sweet, are ye a worldly creature,
> Or heavenly thing in likeness of nature;
> Or are ye God Cupidis own princéss,
> Or are ye verie nature the goddéss?"

We now turn for a moment to the varied decorations and architectural graces of that elegant and voluptuous apartment. The upper part of the ceiling represented the story of "Perseus and Andromeda," and on the coving beneath was depicted that of "Meleager and Atalanta." At intervals, corresponding with each other, in the latter, were also exhibited in compartments, the Four Seasons, designed as beautiful females holding the various productions expressive of their character. At the further extremity of the *salon* was a spacious picture, representing a

"Sleeping Venus," a life-like composition, that threw around the surprised feelings of the spectator a spell of entrancing thraldom. On the opposite side of the chamber was a companion-piece, the subject of which was "Cupid admiring Psyche while she slept." The softness and delicacy of the carnations, the symmetrical and exquisite *contours*, and the free natural grace exhibited in each unconscious attitude of these unveiled and perfect forms, could be attributed to no less gifted a pencil than that of the immortal Apelles. To him alone could belong the success of an illusion, that affected the dazzled gazer with an almost painful excess of admiration; betraying him into a belief that the spells of poetry and imagination were realized, and that he beheld with bodily eye the long-cherished fascinations of the "divine Aphroditê," and of the beautiful bride of Cupid.

The tables, draped with cloth of silver, exhibited the curiously carved heads or legs of animals, at their extremities. A delicate perfume, proceeding from the 'costus,' a kind of shrub growing in Arabia and Persia, pervaded the air. Musical instruments were scattered round; and a variety of sea-shells, of the liveliest hues and most fantastic yet elegant forms, interspersed with curious caskets, jewelled vases, rare embroideries, rich skins—

"With glittering flowers o'erlaid,
Berries of pendent gold,"

and ornaments of *bizarre* construction, added to the

splendours of this Temple of Beauty. The "Destruction of Troy" formed the subject of an extensive piece of tapestry on one side of the apartment.

> "There shone, variegated with gold,
> the web on the walls;
> many wonders to the sight
> of each of the warriors
> that would gaze on it, became visible."

Thus might have recited Sir Ernest Oldworthy, had not the worthy knight's attention been too closely engaged by the occupants of the chamber, to heed its less prominent characteristics.

The fair sleepers appeared to have been engaged in listening to a saga, or tale, recited by one of their number, when the enchanter's wand had converted them into breathing statues; for one of the youngest of the group, a beautiful girl of some fifteen summers (doubtless, the lovely Elstritha, surnamed Swanshals or "Swan's-Neck" (31), the beloved daughter of the gallant Eadulf), was playfully kneeling on a footstool sprinkled with interwoven flowers, as in an imitative gesture of mirthful satire; an arch smile dimpling her soft and blooming cheek, while her rosy lip wore the least possible curl of gentle disdain, as if to give a heightened force to some more striking passage of the story.

> "Through her thin vest her heighten'd beauties shine;
> Of that enchanting age her figure seems,
> When smiling Nature with the vital beams

> Of vivid youth, and Pleasure's purple flame,
> Gilds her accomplish'd work, the female frame,
> With rich luxuriance tender, sweetly wild,
> And just between the woman and the child."

One snowy and delicately-formed arm was raised in graceful dignity to assist the effect of her delivery; the other was tenderly crossed over her bosom of "delectable whiteness," with an air of the most diffident and maidenly reserve.

The dresses of these noble Saxon ladies were of silk, richly embroidered in gold or silver. Bracelets and necklaces of pearl and of sardonyx, topaz, calcedonius, carbuncle, onichinus, and other gems, with a bulla, or amulet, attached to the latter, and rings of varied brilliancy, harmonized with the general details of their superb attire. The tunic, or upper garment of each, worn tight to the figure, and having low, falling sleeves, shewed to eminent advantage the exquisite *tournure* of the bust; over whose snowy loveliness the playful shadows of their light and glancing ringlets shed a half-concealing and daintily-subdued charm!

> "There nut-brown ringlets circling flowed;
> There sparkled eyes of blue;
> And, as a flower midst *runes*, there glowed
> Small lips of roseate hue."

It was a bewildering scene; far more abounding in treacherous peril than aught which they could have expected to befall them, in this mystic labyrinth. The

light of the tapers seemed to derive a clearer and softer lustre, as it fell on the brilliant and harmonious figures of the fair and smiling group.

> "The ruby lips they see
> Unconscious move; and o'er the features flee
> Some transient movements of exciting dreams.
> These pass, and still their sleep unbroken seems."

Well might the surpassing beauty of the youthful Queen renew the impressions left on Sir Ernest's mind by a passage in one of the lays of Henry of Ofterdingen, his favourite among the Minnesingers (32):—

> "And as the beaming moon
> Rides high the stars among,
> And moves with lustre mild
> The mirky clouds along;
> So, midst her maiden throng,
> Up rose that matchless fair;
> And higher swell'd the soul
> Of many a hero there."

Never had the Antiquary, or his Rosicrucian friend, dreamed of the sort of influence which now bound them, as by a spell, in utter vanquishment, at the shrine of the sovereign deity of their impassioned worship. Long did they continue to gaze, with breathless emotion and in feverish delight, on those luxuriant tresses of raven darkness—on the lustrous semi-transparency of that lovely neck—on those delicious little "flower-soft" hands, white as the narwal's tooth; and on those nameless disturbing graces and

witcheries of form and attitude, which constitute the unspeakable charm of soul-commanding Beauty. At length, the Antiquary, having relieved his impeded inspiration by a long-drawn sigh, protested by the chivalric pen of Joseph of Exeter (33), that it were a reproach to them, as the members of an order established by the fair Christina of Sweden, to leave that hall of queenly majesty without a reverent performance of the customary homage due to royalty; and thereupon he gravely and humbly approached the lovely and unconscious monarch, knelt beside the stately couch which she occupied, and imprinted a kiss of devotional fervour on her fair and jewelled hand.

> "A *hand* that kings
> Have lipp'd, and trembled kissing."

Ere he performed, however, this act of courteous solemnity, it might not have been unedifying to observe how almost equally his attention was divided between the delicately-formed and snowy fingers (which claimed the juster preference), and the splendid and curious rings which adorned them.

> "Her *fingers* small, white as whalis bone (34),
> Arrayed with rings and many rubies red."

or, to quote the lay of a more modern muse—

> "*Fingers* fair, where clinging jewels glow
> With light upon the soft white hand, like sunbeams upon snow."

The latter objects, indeed, reminded him of the

"ancient and sparkling treasures brought from afar;" and as he gazed upon them, for a moment oblivious of the greater fascination of her hand, he but paid an honest tribute to the ruling passion of his nature, which ever expanded with the sight of ancient gems—

> "Both full of glory, rarely cut and set;"

or, as we read elsewhere, in the page of our lamented Chatterton,—

> "Pretious *bighes* (35), ynne golde of beste allaie;
> Echone dothe make the other seeme more fayre:"

He loved them for the scenes of other times, which they brought back to the mental eye; as memorials of the spells of departed beauty; as old and curious relics of the princely pageantry of the past!

Scarce, however, had the Antiquary's lip accosted the small, delicious hand of Cariberta, when his wondering eye was withdrawn from its white and delicate beauty, its fairy-like buoyancy and graceful littleness, by a sudden and startling event. The ear of the appalled adventurers was subitaneously invaded, and their attention averted from the contemplation of sleeping beauty, by a shrill and bursting crash of unearthly music, that, deepening in tone and volume as it proceeded, poured forth, by degrees, the commingling echoes of a thousand unknown and mysterious instruments; a deep, rolling accompaniment, like that of gongs and clarions, kettle-drums, cannon, and thunder united, forming a mighty and symphonious bass, that

swept the chords of the spirit with a fierce and irresistible mastery; subduing, as by a talismanic impulse, each softer emotion of amorous sentiment, and inspiring the loftiest sense of heroic energy in its place. A sudden emotion pervaded the features and frame of the beautiful monarch,—

"Trembles the queen, swift-changing, her cheeks wax pale and glow;
So plays the ruddy North light on fields of spotless snow:
As two storm-shaken lilies, rock'd on the wild waves' breast,
So toss'd her troubled bosom beneath its heaving vest."

The high and awful purpose for which they had dared to fathom the intricacies of this mysterious region, flashed upon their minds in vivid distinctness; and they hastened to obey, with a feeling of reproved unworthiness, the invisible mandate that recalled them from their forgetfulness of duty.

It was not, however, without a parting sigh that they turned aside from the fascinations of this enchanted sphere of love, beauty, mirth, and gracefulness, to meet the sterner scene that awaited their presence.

"'Magnis tamen excidit ausis!'" shouted the Philosopher.

"Ay, ay,—'Onward!' be the motto," replied the Antiquary; "'Floreat Amarantus!'"

The wildly-majestic and soul-thrilling music ceased with the same abruptness that had marked its opening passage; and the loud, emphatic voice of Sir Ernest,

as he pronounced the two words last spoken, sounded, amid the succeeding stillness, with a peculiarly-solemn expression of energetic fervour.

As they once more raised the tapestry-curtain, to allow of their exeunt, Dr. Dánskiölldr paused for a moment, and, with a countenance evincing the mingled sentiments of pride and pique, thus accosted his erewhile ironically-disposed associate:—

"Sir Ernest Oldworthy, we are now about to gaze on the companion-picture to this scene of queenly pomp. The heroic King of Lethra—that mighty Askew to whom fate has assigned so strange a power of playing the despot over our captive imaginations; he, whom the writers of the ancient sagas have described as the 'Powerful Lord of Earls'—the 'Giver of the Bracelets of the Nobles'—the 'Highest Type of Honour'—the 'Helmet of his People'—the 'Eagle of Battle;' yes, he whom thy own late idolatrous homage had invested with the kindred epithets of the 'Burgonet of Men'—the 'Model of Warriors'—the 'Flos Heroum'—the 'Mirabilis Mars of Northern chivalry'—the 'Atlas'—the 'Earthly Jove;'—he, I say, will, in a few short moments, be revealed to us in all his princely and warlike terrors! Ha! ha! ha! I warrant me, Sir Antiquary, should the 'King of Victorious Battle' prove less courteous than we may of right expect, looking upon us as enemies rather than friends, and proposing to treat us accordingly, you will not forget your championly vow—to 'scotch him

and notch him like a carbonado!'—to 'tip him a Roland for his Oliver!'—to 'give him a counterbuff for his canvasada!' Ha! ha! ha!"

"I but spoke of following your own example, Master Alchymist," returned Sir Ernest, "when you proposed the 'panoply of your Christian armour' against the 'dreadful Thor himself, seated, thunderbolt in hand, on his throne of fire!' Yea, brother-errant, thou spokest of thyself as a shield against the 'Wielder of Lightning'—the 'Thunderer,' and 'all the powers of Heathenesse!' Whose cock, therefore, crowed most loudly? 'Gloriosiùs aut gloriosissimè?' Hum—aha—haugh! A shrewd gird, my Master!" and he laughed a merry laugh at the success of this *boutade;* after which our "duo fulmina belli," as Virgil might have called them, proceeded on their mighty course of action.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE "DRAGON OF THE SHIELD."

CAR. *Alive again! then shew me where he is;*
I'll give a thousand pound to look upon him.
Henry VI., Part 2. Act iii. sc. 3.

OUR knightly associates now re-entered the vestibule. A death-like stillness prevailed. The cressets burned with a less vivid lustre, and with a fainter motion; while the pallid flame of the tapers above emitted a yet feebler light. Amid the indistinctness which prevailed, Sir Ernest Oldworthy at one moment thought that he perceived the waving of a white mantle in one of the more distant and obscure recesses of the spacious apartment; and his fancy depicted the form of the venerable Skald, as accompanying them, "though unseen," through the trials that awaited them. A hollow plaintive sound, like that occasioned by the sweep of a gust of wind over the strings of a deep-toned harp, appeared to issue from the same direction at the next instant, and confirmed his consolatory supposition. The reverentially excited pair, after pausing for a brief interval, pro-

ceeded with rapid strides across the richly-tessclated and glittering floor, whereon the colossal figure of the imperial warrior was relieved and thrown out with striking distinctness. They gazed instinctively at the long-extended motto on the near entablature, whose gilt characters alternately glowed with impressive brilliancy, or lapsed into vague obscurity, according to the changeful disposition of the light; seeming, at each brighter interval, to claim an added degree of attention to its singularly-appropriate admonition:— "Magnis tamen excidit ausis!" Having traversed the spacious and fast-darkening area of the magnificent chamber, they addressed themselves to the opposite door, which, as we have before said, was approached by a majestic flight of steps. Its richly-carved panels and embossed frame-work gave note that it afforded entrance to some hall or saloon of superior dignity to any which they had yet visited. As the Antiquary pressed the lever of the ponderous latch, it slowly yielded, and the right valve of the massive barrier swung gradually open. The spectacle that met their gaze from within, prepared them at a glance for the crowning issue of the enterprise. A sudden and startling burst of light discovered to them, with the effect produced by a *coup de théâtre*, the final scene of their marvellous and soul-surprising adventure. They approached, with trembling yet resolute steps, the awful and mysterious abiding-place of the "charnelled prince," and his chief followers—his

"palace band"—his "dear brethren in the war-field!" A strange bewildering sensation accompanied the act.

Aid us, ye venerable shades of the *saga-men* of old; ye immortal spirits that once glowed with the skaldic fire of the ancient North, to paint in colours of characteristic vigour, and with a stern truthfulness of detail, the mighty and stirring scene that now seemed to give back to their appalled gaze the dead of past ages!

At the head of a wide and long-extended board, draped with crimson and gold embroidery, and covered with dazzling goblets of gold and silver, and with ivory *orcas* (36), and other costly vessels of Grecian and Spanish workmanship, sat the illustrious and honoured founder of the feast—

> "The kingly Askew, lord of nations,
> Chief of the Dragon Shield."

The "Blood-red Star of Hleidra"—"Ocean's Fierce and Storm-nursed Child"—the "Battle-king over the Road of the Swans;"—the high and deeply-cherished object of the Antiquary's superstitious regard!

The stature of the royal hero attained to the enormous amplitude of *nine* feet, and his person was as remarkable for its superior elevation of mien, as for its unusual dimensions. A vestment of polished steel (his invulnerable "war-ban") reflected the brilliant flood of light from above, in wildly-flashing and fretful gleams, like those of the levin-fire that had accorded

their splendour to his name. A braided scarf, worked in thread of gold, and ornamented with precious stones, traversed his battle-garmented breast, and a broad belt of gold, embroidered with pearls and richly inlaid with semi-globes of white and red coral, surrounded his waist, sustaining two ruby-hilted daggers of eastern workmanship.

> "His mantle, rich with many a gem,
> Strewed the bespangled ground;
> Along whose border's purple hem
> The spotless ermine wound."

His amber-coloured hair, divided from the crown to the forehead, fell in waving ringlets down the sides of the head, and his beard, of a somewhat browner hue, swept with picturesque wildness over his cheeks and upper lip, terminating in a double fork. The countenance of the King reminded the Antiquary of the portrait of Canute the Great. "He was fair, and distinguished for his beauty; his nose was thin, eminent, and aquiline; his hair was profuse; his eyes bright and fierce." An indented circlet of gold illumined his brow, and his noble features wore the proud look of kingly majesty; while the spell of ancient slumber that bound him, could neither stifle the fire which lighted up his eye, nor repress the spirit of bold disdain which dwelt upon his lip. The raised seat of the mighty chief was covered with—

> "A bear-skin—the hide sable,
> Crimson red the gaping snout, but the claws o'ershod with silver."

A beautiful maiden, in male attire, whose light and elastic figure was set off to the utmost advantage, by a closely-fitting tunic of snowy white, and a slender blue scarf, fringed with silver, worn across the breast, stood near the monarch, and, with lowly obeisance, presented a waldochse's horn, adorned with golden feet (the once favourite drinking vessel of King Burrhed), and, doubtless, containing the most costly pigment or morat. The smile, so graceful and expressive of sincere homage, which accompanied this act, remained fixed, as at the moment of its natural effusion over the blushing features. On the opposite side of the royal chair, a bald, slouch-eared, yellow-skinned, monstrous-looking dwarf, holding an 'ore-lipped' cup, made out of a human skull of gigantic size (probably, that of King Hrothgar), tendered, with the demoniac leer peculiar to his distorted visage, some other potion to the kingly battle-chief. The ministration of these attendants reminded the Antiquary of a passage in the Saxon poem, of "Beowulf:"

"The cupbearers distributed the wine from *wonderful vessels*."

Long, and with increasing interest, did the almost-entranced intruders gaze upon the colossal and stately person of the august warrior; half-oblivious of the numerous distinguished guests that surrounded the princely table. These latter were disposed in the various attitudes, and marked with the correspondent expression of features, that characterized the mood of each, at the period of the fatal summons to oblivion.

The attention of the Chevaliers was now drawn to the magnificence of the architectural accessories of the scene before them; the effect of which was rendered still more impressive by the powerful opposition of light and shade. The noble and spacious hall displayed a profusion of beautiful ornaments, in the high gusto of the Greek antique. An immense bas-relief, in Pentelic marble, of a greyish-white, representing the "Council of the Gods," the numerous figures of which were most elaborately and exquisitely carved, occupied a wide space on the side of the apartment at which they had entered. The lofty ceiling was decorated with the story of "Jupiter and Semele;" and an air of strikingly-picturesque majesty pervaded its minor embellishments. The roof was supported by a range of green porphyry columns, with their bases, capitals, architraves, friezes, and cornices, carved in half relief, representing combats and histories; and which extended the lavish show of splendour on either side, forming a perspective of the most imposing character. From a massive gilt chain, attached to an ogee, or, as the Romans would have called it, a cima, in the centre of the ceiling, was suspended a ponderous bronze chandelier of twelve branches, that imparted a gorgeous blaze of light to the variegated aspect of the table beneath; where fruits and cates, of choice and tempting delicacy, were copiously distributed amidst beakers, and wine-flasks of various materials, enriched with gold or silver. The floor was strewn with seal-

skins; and skulls and horns of the elk, and the rein-deer mingled picturesquely with the martial trophies, and other decorations, of the pillars and walls.

A crowd of officers, retainers, and servants, stood at various distances apart, as in the act of waiting on the festive party, or of attending, exclusively, the royal orders. Harpers, and other musicians, were stationed in a gallery above. At the extremity of the hall, a band of gigantic and bearded warriors was ranged as a corps de garde, or rather, as a garde du corps; while, on either side of the throned seat of the illustrious host, and at a short interval of separation from the cup-bearers before alluded to, was stationed a functionary, styled the vardhalldsmadr, or warden, whose uplifted axe, glancing, from time to time, in the fitful changes of the light, deepened the impressions of barbaric dignity which characterized the tableau. These two fierce-looking attendants (the one with an ugly, hawk-mouthed face, the other with a huge sallow crooked nose), were clad in sable garments, and were also the executioners of the palace. The royal body-guard consisted, *selon* the "Northern Chronicles," of some hundred and twenty followers, of whom about fifty were now present. They were all uniformly and richly suited: on their heads they wore gilt burgonets (37), and on their bodies a triple gilt habergeon (38); swords, with gilt hilts, girded to their waists; a battle axe on their left shoulders; a target, with gilt bosses, borne in their left hand; a

dart in the right hand; and their arms bound about with two bracelets of gold. One of the most gigantic of the band, whose stature exceeded eight feet, bore a lofty sable banner, distinguished by a "Dragon" of meteor gold; which might seem to be the identical ensign gazed upon by our adventurers, in their visionary visitation to the "Hall of Dragon Shields," in the ancient and deserted palace of Hleidra. The whole of this mixed assemblage were in the rigidly-fixed attitudes of previous animation, with the exception of the wardens; the restless motion of whose axes alone disturbed the profound tranquillity of the picture. Sir Ernest Oldworthy, observing this incident, remarked, that it was strikingly-indicative of the active nature of those officers' functions, when awake, that, even in that prolonged lethargic trance, their muscles should, instinctively, as it were, grasp with apparent impatience the murderous instruments of their office.

The *tout ensemble* presented a rude charm of Gothic magnificence, far more powerful in its appeal to the sympathies than the most refined and elevated display of modern splendour. We must now describe, as they consecutively engaged the notice of our worthy associates, the principal personages occupying the convivial board. And, first, we would enter somewhat more into detail respecting the King himself—the redoubtable and right-puissant Askew, concerning whose character and achievements the most industrious and discerning of our local antiquaries had found them-

selves unable to elide the slightest spark of information. He now reclined, in a posture of dignified ease upon his throne-like seat, above which was a crimson canopy embellished with stars and chaplets of silver embroidery, laced and fringed with gold, and surmounted by a crown, that gave an air of due state to his position at the board. He was clad in a triple hauberk (39); the half-exposed sleeves of his tunic were of blue silk, enriched with silver flowers; and he wore two massive golden armlets. A two-edged sword, of prodigious size (the "precious gift of Hrædla,") with a golden belt, hung by his side; and over his shoulders was slung a battle-axe of smaller dimensions, damasked with silver (the gift of the Count Gradinego), an appendage which, as we learn from the chronicle of his life, he seldom suffered to quit his person. A small sceptre, the shaft of which was of crystal, surrounded by rings of pearl, and a gilded ategar, or assagay, lay on a runed tablet of gold, at his right hand, as emblems of supreme civil authority and chief military command; and were now probably exposed in ceremonial observance of the "Festival of the Sun." His gigantic, crown-encircled "Dragon"-crested helm, towering with eagle feathers; his enormous spear, and ponderous "moon-round" shield, with its appropriate ensign, the "Dragon," glittering with costly adornments, added to the decoration of the raised seat which he occupied; the former being deposited in a "fore-right" position on the

chevron-like point of the high-backed chair; and the two latter suspended beneath it. Again did the memory of the Antiquary revert to the pages of his favourite "Beowulf"—

> "They fixed over their heads
> the shields of Hilda;
> the boards of bright wood.
> There high over the *Etheling* (40) on his bench,
> the helmet of the noble one was seen,
> his ringed coat of mail,
> his glorious wood of strength."

Well might the words of England's noblest bard—her "poëta poëtarum"—be applied to the royal and haughty hero of the race of Odin:—

> "He sits 'mongst men like a *descended god;*
> He hath a kind of honour sets him off
> More than a *mortal seeming.*"

"What would old Saxo, Torfæus the elder, Rudbeck, and Joannes and Olaus Magnus have said to this?" exclaimed Sir Ernest Oldworthy, with an enthusiastic fervour that burst through the awful constraint with which he had first beheld the strange and mysterious spectacle exposed to his excited vision; "by the soul of Charles the Twelfth, I have lived an hundred years in the last mortal minute! Gods! how sublimely terrible,—how inconceptibly grand, the 'gigantesque' aspect of yon ancient war-king! What is the golden pomp of that royal crown to the majestic shadows which veil, with such pleasing dread, the lofty and

imperious brow beneath! Lo! the solemn sternness of that eagle eye! The graceful haughtiness of that boldly-chiselled and curling lip! And observe, brother knight, the commanding air of martial repose! the awful serenity of that sceptered mien, so imposingly harmonizing with the giant proportions of the stately form! 'Quam fortis pectore, et armis!'—What a strong breast! What large shoulders! What, indeed, were the Jupiters and the Herculeses of the noblest sculptors of antiquity to yon unrivalled incarnation of beauty, strength, and majesty! What the proudest productions of the Florentine school, so excellent and impressive in design, to the grandeur and sublimity of yon solitary specimen of nature's own matchless magnificence!

> 'The *demi Atlas* of this *earth*, the *arm*
> And *burgonet* of *men*.'

"'Sdeath! how doth our wonder grow with indulgence; our curiosity, with enjoyment. Now would I wander amid a thousand objects of rapturous search, 'hoc deliciarum campo'—in this enchanted region of delight! Yon mighty sword is, doubtless, the old weapon of the giant Hring, the 'mystic legacy of Hrædla,' bearing the talismanic inscription 'enwrought by Sindri;' the letters of which used to glow with a fiery red, when the hour of battle approached! And yon vast resplendent shield, which so dazzlingly hurls back the fitful gleam of the lamps, is the same, I

wiss, that flashed its terrors in the eye of the bereaved Ceolwulf! Behold, where, soaring on high, in the distance, exults the glorious Landeyda, or the 'Ravager of the Land.' Where, alas, is the 'Long Serpent'—the valiant ship that so often bore it 'rejoicing over the depths of the sea, on its path to the glories of victory?' Where is the 'ring-prowed bark, the steed of the sea-flood, shining like silver, and ready to start forth, over the broad brine, over the roaring of the waters, over the great tumult of the waves?' We see before us the 'noblest chiefs of hosts, and the oldest and fiercest in war;' but where are the 'white-armed maidens' that should 'welcome with blushing smiles the gallant sailors over the sea?' Alas, the 'noise of the harp, and the clear song of the poet,' have passed away with the 'hall, the mighty hall, high and carved with pinnacles;' the 'dwelling places of their race' are no more. Truly spake that ancient warrior, the redoubted Thorkill, who now so strangely appears in living semblance before us (you cannot mistake in pronouncing which of those illustrious occupants of the royal board rejoices in the *sobriquet* of 'Arm-of-Iron'), when he said, 'Fate goeth ever as she must!' The heroic age of the north is fled with the halls of old! The grey mists of departed years have shrouded its noblest memories in the death sleep of the past! Its surviving recollections are but as a dream of the night, or as a sunbeam struggling for a moment with the clouds of darkness!"

On the right hand of the king sat Thorkill, surnamed, as we have just seen, "Arm-of-Iron," who filled the office of Stallere, or "Constable of the Host (41)," as the Franks would have styled him. He was a middle-aged and fierce-looking man of great stature, and of high, soldierly bearing. He had a green under-gown or vest, rather close, descending to the wrists, with a white border at the neck, wrists, and the bottom. His upper robe was purple with yellow stripes, much looser than the other. His feet were girt with brown sandals. On his left was Doldraskir, the Dish Thane (42), with a large knife at his girdle and a wooden trencher depending from his neck, as symbolical of his office of carving the meat for royalty. He was a fat, little, oily-faced worthy, over whose brow the snows of some sixty winters had passed, and who seemed to have especially thriven under the genial occupation that accompanied his post. A sharp fox nose, a squint of ominous and intolerable fervour, and a wriggling gape that gave to one's idea the swallowing of a bolus that descended with difficulty, mingled their agreeable expression in his purple features. Doldraskir's under-dress was a sort of orange with light blue stripes; over this was a white robe with violet-coloured stripes. His sleeves were tight to the arm, and of the same colour as his vest. His neck, wrists, and the bottom of his under-dress were decorated with a broad blue and yellow border. He wore loose fawn-coloured stockings, and

yellow shoes. Next to the Stallere sat Ulfr, the Bower Thane, or chamberlain, who kept the key of the king's "hoard." He was a thin, hollow-cheeked, hoary-headed, withered-looking wight, with a dark, sinister aspect, and a restless and anxious eye; such as may so often be traced in the heavy-hearted school of Mammon. He wore a crimson robe flowered with green, buttoned at the neck, where it opened, and shewed an under garment of light green, striped with yellow. He wore sandals of brown leather with red laces. The sullen and rivelled physiognomy of this latter functionary ludicrously contrasted with that of the jester, Bumbur, who stood near, and whose description may challenge a moment's attention. He was a little, bald, hard-favoured being, with a stiff neck, and an affectation in his look and gesture, that seemed to proclaim a profound belief in his own oracular wisdom. He had a narrow, bulging forehead, and a pair of greenish-grey eyes of large dimensions; the latter having something of the appearance of a couple of stale oysters. His nose, it might be sworn, was pug, of the most popularly-received fashion; but he had a deep cut nostril of very peculiar shape, resembling one of the ventages, or sound holes, in the belly of a fiddle; and his mouth, curving upwards, nearly reached his ears when he laughed, as appeared from the present expression of his features. To finish the portrait we may add, on the authority of the "Northern Chronicles," that when awake, he had an

odd, jerking shuffle with his legs and arms, that reminded the observer of a child's jack-a-legs put into motion with a string; the head and body seeming carved out of one solid substance: and his garments wore, like himself, an air of perking effrontery, as if they had caught their style by infection from the wearer. Bumbur's doublet was of a pea-green colour, with broad scarlet stripes of a zig-zag form, having wide upper-sleeves edged with frills descending to the elbows, and close under-sleeves of crimson silk. A deep frill surrounded his neck. On his back was wrought in gold embroidery a couchant "Dragon," the cognizance of King Askew. His breeches, made very full, were of white linen spotted with black, blue, yellow, and red, and decorated with deep frills at the knees. His stockings fitted tightly, and were striped horizontally with scarlet and white; his shoes white, with broad blue and red roses at the tie. In a girdle of red leather he carried a purse or wallet, and a short wooden sword, or dagger formed of a thin piece of lath. His cap, which was of white linen spotted with black, and adorned with a zig-zag stripe of blue at the bottom, was furnished with a cock's-comb, and over it he wore a hood that displayed a tall pair of ears garnished with several small silver bells. In his right hand he held a sceptre or bauble, the badge of his office; being a short rod, surmounted by an ivory carving representing a grotesque head, like his own, with a jester's cap and bells, and terminating

with the broad frill that completed the bust. To this rod an inflated bladder was annexed. But to return to the dignitaries at the royal table.

Beneath the great officers last mentioned (who were also of the rank of Jarlls), sat other of the *nobiles majores*, or greater thanes, distinguished on public occasions by their golden collars and caps of maintenance; and still lower than these were seated the inferior nobles, who served the king in times of war; and wore, as indicative of their rank, the swords with which they were solemnly girt, and by virtue of which rite they were entitled to be called the king's ministers. These were, for the most part, robust, sun-burnt, long-bearded, and piratical-looking personages, whose proneness to intemperance, particularly in drinking, might be clearly traced in their bloated and inflamed features. Yet was there a certain manifestation of sturdy, uncultured grandeur in their stalwart forms and bold independent demeanour; while their ample draperies gave a more commanding effect to their lofty stature. Their garments were of graver colours, and coarser materials, than those which we have described as belonging to the greater thanes; but still of expensive fabric, elaborately ornamented with embroidery, and trimmed and lined with furs made from sables, martens, beavers, and foxes. An air of indomitable fierceness still characterised these northern chiefs in sleep; and it was evident that, at the time when the soporific spell of Nyradur had

taken effect, some exciting and angry debate had engaged the party, for more than one had his sword or dagger half-drawn, as in sudden menace; while several of the costly drinking-cups, scattered on the floor (some, as the Antiquary observed, with fringed edges, others curiously knobbed and variegated with gold), attested the frantic intoxication of others. The king alone wore a look of patient, though stern composure. A smile of haughty superiority lighted up the depths of his eye, and curved the arch expression of his lip. His air seemed to dilate with an abrupt manifestation of fiery resolve, that was rather its habitual characteristic than the result of momentary excitement. The Antiquary gazed with deeply-absorbed interest on the strange and dream-like specacle before him.

> "Orderly around the walls, on projecting steel suspended,
> Helm and mail assorted hung; here and there a sword combining
> Shot a gleam athwart the hall like a winter's-evening meteor.
> Brighter yet than helm or sword, shone the shield's metallic mirror,
> Beaming as the solar orb, or the lunar disk of silver."

Not a shield or banner on the trophied walls escaped the searching curiosity of Sir Ernest's glance; and, one after another, did they present to his learned eye some familiar token of their connection with the cherished themes of Scandinavian lore that dwelt in his teeming mind. Here was the "Golden Dragon," at

once the ensign of Hleidra, of Mercia, and of Wessex, though differing, in each standard, in the particular of its attitude; or, heraldically speaking, its *position;* there the "Belted Apple" of Upland, and the "Snow-white Steed," so conspicuous, in other years, as the war-sign of Hengist and Horsa. These latter symbols of the earlier occupation (43) of that ancient hall had been allowed to remain in their long-accustomed station by the magnanimous award of the heroic and generous Askew. Mingling with the warlike and glittering records thus collected, were disposed, at intervals, the brazen or stone effigies of Odin, Friga (44), Thor, Tuisco (45), Seater (46), Niörd (47), the Sun (48), the Moon (49), Braga (50), Rheda (51), Eostre (52), Fosete (53), Hertha (54), and other deities (55). One by one, they caught our Antiquary's delighted attention; adding, at every moment, to the absorbing impressions of his wild and novel situation. Strangely happy, yet bewildering moments! diamond sparkles caught from the more playful current of Time! or resembling, rather, the gilded drops of some potent, intoxicating, yet exquisitely-flavoured *liqueur!* The gaze of his brother chevalier was fixed, in agitated suspense, on the rigid features of the Hero-King; from whose noble and commanding presence the scene more immediately derived its sustained associations of martial dignity.

The reflections of the adventurers were at length disturbed by a return of their late aërial monition.

Strains of wild and enrapturing music now seemed to shake the roof of the stately hall, descending upon the ear in gusty sweeps of turbid and thrilling power; and it might be deemed that no spell of inferior potency to that of the mighty Odin could have called into existence sounds, and combinations of sounds, of such imposing and terrific grandeur. By degrees, however, this mysterious flood of harmony lost its stormy and dark impulses, as well as its unearthly character; and a cheerful, yet somewhat wild symphony, accosted the agitated listener, seeming to unite the tones of the majestic organ, and of numberless flutes, oboes, and trumpets, with the occasional accompaniment of drums, bells, and cymbals. In a short time, these animating sounds ceased, and a chorus of lute-like instruments, fraught with solemn and plaintive sweetness, poured a rich and varied stream of ethereal melody through that ancient and proudly-featured hall (56). A tenderly-impressive and dreamily-enrapturing cadence, that almost appeared to waft on the breeze-disporting pinions of its celestial power, the sweetly-enthralled sense of the impassioned hearer, to some far and beauteous world of ever-varied, ever-smiling, happiness, died slowly, slowly away, with soft and faintly-prolonged echoes; leaving a magic serenity on the air, as its last attenuated vibrations harmoniously melted into silence!

A deep and impressive stillness now succeeded. The moment had evidently arrived, when the courage

of our heroes of the "Amaranth" was to be tested. That dread assemblage of ancient warriors, so "terrible in war-onsets and grim battle," required but the summons prescribed in the tablet of the "Giant's-Staff," to awake in all the terrors of their fierce and savage nature; perhaps, to visit with ungrateful, or indiscriminating violence, their appointed deliverers from the thraldom of the spell! Direful thought! bringing with it a confused, yet vivid, crowd of images, that assembled in one mighty league of spectral horror, to prostrate the benumbed faculties of the soul! Tremblingly, at length, did the worthy knight of Repingdon approach the sleeping person of the stern and haughty monarch of Lethra—*the actual, living form of* KING ASKEW!!! that mysterious being on whom he had pondered so continuously, year after year, with the anxious hope of solving the fact of his questionable existence! Yes, there sat the "Living Dead," the "Mighty of Old," the "Thunderbolt of the Gar-Danes," the "Whirlwind of War," the "Shield of Warriors," the "Flame-bearer," the "Destroyer," the "King of Victorious Battle," the "Far-famed Askew," the "Dragon of the Shield!" Yes, there he sat, he, whose age was to be told by centuries, while his look yet indicated the flower of manhood! There he reclined, with the frown of conscious greatness upon his brow, with the smile of heroic disdain upon his lip; as if even in his dreams he remembered himself the god-born, kingly warrior that he

was! What, if, at the moment, wherein the term of enchanted somnolence expired, he should start up in a spirit of dread revenge, and, seizing the Moorish weapon that lay beside him, or unsheathing the terrific spada that hung at his belt, exterminate his hapless rescuers, as the supposed partisans of his necromantic enemy! Awful, overwhelming reflection! Thus thought the Antiquary, but an impulse of sudden determination confronted his fears; and without pondering an instant further on the probable consequences of the act, he obeyed the opportune suggestion that arose in his mind, and proceeded, with breathless haste, to the task of withdrawing from the left side of the sleeper's tunic the destined restorative. Insinuating his hand within the King's hauberk (the "War-ban" of the Chronicle), and searching, with minute care, for the concealed receptory of the charm, he speedily discovered, and drew forth from an inner pocket of the monarch's sub-garment, the golden casket containing the awful spell.

At this anxious moment, there was a solemnity so profound in the unbroken silence of that vast and crowded hall, that to raise the slightest echo in disturbance, seemed an act of daring and sacrilegious outrage!

Opening the richly-chased case, which was embellished with Runic characters, and with the couchant figure of a "Dragon," Sir Ernest found a minute, elegantly-formed, purple-coloured vial, of most curious

and elaborate workmanship. It was not a moment, however, in which to indulge his antiquarian curiosity; a crowd of undefined images of terror—mountain torrents—wild glaciers—avalanches of snow—coruscations of the aurora borealis—roars of fierce beasts —shocks of closing warriors in the war-onset,—all mixed up in one fearful scene of mad disturbance, rushed wildly across his brain, as he removed the vial from the case, and withdrew the golden, skull-shaped stopper. From the mouth of the talismanic vessel issued a pale smoke, impregnated with a pungent and offensive odour. He now approached the right side of the King, and, while his companion's heart and his own beat with audible distinctness, he mastered the feeling of rising reluctance that again obtruded, raised himself on his toes to gain the elevation required for his purpose, turned his face towards the North, and, pronouncing, with a faltering voice, the cabalistic words assigned to the act, lodged the prescribed portion of the bright yellow fluid in the royal ear.

As the *seventh* drop fell, a deafening burst of volleyed thunders seemed to cleave the palace to its foundation. A thousand wild and discordant shrieks, mingled with the wailing notes of supposed "dragons," or other unearthly creatures, succeeded; which were soon accompanied by terrific yells and loud explosions of fiend-like laughter. An icy perspiration stood on the brow of the operator: his limbs were congealed with terror. At length, with a renewed and violent

effort, he in some degree mastered his apprehensions, and pronounced, for the *third* and *last* time (the trine, or ternary number was full of mysteries from the earliest antiquity),—the adjuration appointed to follow:—"The Horn of Heimdallur hath Seven Times sounded!—The Seven Seals of the Magic Scroll of Nyradur have perished in the Mystic Blood of the Dragon!—The Voice of the All-Father bids you depart!—The *Dysæ* cry unto the Sleepers—'AWAKE!'"

The Antiquary had scarcely concluded this runic *formula*, when the magic vial became so intensely heated, that he involuntarily let it ėscape from his grasp. It fell on the golden-runed tablet beside the king's chair, from which it rebounded and again became precipitated, alighting, but for an instant, on one of the steps of the raised seat, and thence descending, with increased velocity, to the iron-sheathed toe of one of the Vardhalldsmadr, when it was shivered into countless atoms. The infernal shouts and hideous outcries were repeated with increased and astounding violence; the *barbaresque* trophies on the walls rattled with ominous fury; the Runic banners were violently waved to and fro; the grim and uncouth effigies of the wild Northern deities seemed to partake of the surrounding uproar, and to stretch forth their strange arms, in gestures of horrid glee. For a moment only did the visual portion of this hideous disturbance assail the eye of the petrified gazer: a densely-obscuring smoke issued from the scattered fluid, and abruptly

filled the spacious apartment. The noisome effect of the enchanted vapour was such as almost to overpower the nerves of the alarmed exorcists. That this was, however, the mode in which the mysterious liquid was destined to communicate its reviving efficacy to the victims of Nyradur's ban, was speedily evidenced; for, after the lapse of a short interval, the fumes as suddenly dispersed; the demoniac execrations ceased; and the terrified adventurers then beheld, with an intensity of awe that seemed to make the heart intermit its beatings, the great result of their hazardous achievement!—But we will gladly throw aside the recording pen, for a few moments of recovered vigour, ere we venture to describe the series of extraordinary and fearful incidents that preceded the final issue of their marvellous adventure. And here we would invite the sympathizing reader to join us in filling a beaded bumper of veritable old Hock; and, as we place before him the "long necked tapering flask," and a studded goblet of ancient Bohemian facture, we propose to him also, as a toast, the words of an old Norwegian *chanson à boire*, which we have seen quoted by Sir Ernest Oldworthy, in the course of this eventful narrative:—

"To all friends who are near, and all friends far away!"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TERMINATION OF THE ANTIQUARY'S MIDNIGHT ADVENTURE.

LOTH. Hearke! thou dull sinner. *Is this reall? eh?*
BORA. Sir, let him that hath a heart of his owne,
Think what he list.
LOTH. Doe they adore, or floute me now?
BORA. All is witchcraft: know, when the moone winks,
There's something in it besides an eclipse.
The Cruell Brother, Act ii. sc. 1.

UP sprang, from his canopied seat, the awakened King, seizing the dreaded ategar, as he rose; and up sprang, as with one connected impulse, every guest of the princely table, drawing his gleaming spada, or dudgeon, at the same instant. Jester, cup-bearers, wardens, soldiers, attendants, musicians, all started into immediate and active vigilance. The wardens whirled their dreadful axes round their heads, with a cry of exulting fierceness. The soldiers commenced striking their targets furiously with their long darts. The musicians seized their various instruments, and blew a very tempest of discordant sounds. The great folding-doors were flung wide open, and the disordered

rout of the guard-room, headed by the savage-looking giant, bearing the dwarf on his hideous shoulders, rushed in, pell-mell, flourishing madly above their heads their spadas, anlaces, ategars, and halberds, some roaring, some howling, each exhibiting the most frantic gestures of delight. All was riot and extravagance. A reckless hilariousness set in wildest motion every limb and muscle. They shouted, and laughed, and danced, and wrestled, in the irrestrainable exuberance of their transport. Flinging his belled cap to the ceiling, Bumbur performed a double-summerset, by way of jubilation, at his own share of the general recovery. Nor was his grotesque mirth decreased by the sudden and total ignition of his unfortunate head-gear, in the chandelier; with which it had become connected in its descent. On the other hand, he evinced his satisfaction at the unforeseen casualty, by still more absurd antics; while, in a shrill, laughing voice, he delivered himself of an impromptù rhyme, wedded to a tune equally off-handed. At the next moment he popped his bauble into the yawning mouth of the Silentiary (57), who replied, with a sharp rap of his wand on Bumbur's bald pate.

But this example of merriment was unregarded by the royal guests. A sudden blaze of furious resentment filled the eyes of the entire party, as their first and appalling glance fell on the hapless beings to whom they unconsciously owed their deliverance. Inarticulate cries of stormy rage burst fearfully around.

In vain did the Silentiary, after a long, and yet half-suppressed yawn, bethink himself of his function, and strike the accustomed pillar with his official wand. The sign was unobserved in that distracted and tempestuous crisis.

"Hah! by the mallet (58) of Thor," at length vociferated the monarch, with a voice that sounded like the quick, shrill roar of a buffalo, when startled by its descent into the pit-fall, "their doom is sealed!"

"And so is my old cap's," cried Bumbur, "cock's-comb, ass's-ears, baby's-bells, and all!" And again he gave vent to his glee in a thousand grotesque gestures, which he accompanied with a wild impromptù:—

"Eh-haw! *Ting-a-ring!*
Cock-a-doodle, doo!
And, now the cap-and-bells are gone,
Who 's the fool? who?"

But the gigantic King's awful displeasure withdrew the attention of all from the Jester's episodical extravagance. The spirit of Pagan ferocity was aroused, and a Hyperborean tempest, of still wilder fury, burst forth. Brandishing their lofty darts, the garde du corps of the enraged sovereign raised a shout that might have startled the dun deer of old Nedewode, at the distance of a brace of leagues. At the next moment, they rushed impetuously forward—

"And fierce with grasped arms,
Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war."

"Backward, ye brood of Hela, or by the bull's head of Radegast, I will smite off every head, in the turning of an hour-glass!" Thus exclaimed the Stallere, in a tone that resembled the cruning of a bull; while a long ray of yellow flame shot from his dreadful eye, as he opposed his falchion to the disordered rout that threatened to overwhelm the unfortunate Antiquary and his colleague.

The fate of these, our worthies, was, however, but delayed; and seemed destined to be accomplished with additional terrors. Sir Ernest's facetious anticipation of a "*pickled* porpoise," and a "dish of *peppered* broth," appeared likely to be realized in a figurative sense, not quite so satisfactory.

"Drag the detested sorcerers to the stake!" roared, or rather thundered forth "Arm-of-Iron," as soon as he had driven back the throng of unbidden assailants. "By the glorious luminary of our late worship, they shall die as victims at the pillar of the Irminsula! See to your office, vardhalldsmadr!"

"Spread their ribs into the figure of an eagle!" howled Ulfr, frowning, till his eye-brows met together, and waving his sparkling anlace above his head, as if he longed for the personal execution of the task.

"And give them brine enough for the basting!" screamed Doldraskir, the Dish-thane, flourishing his long knife of office, and, grasping his trencher as a shield, lest, in that confused *mêlée*, some inadvertent

weapon should greet his very prominent fulness of person.

"Cock-a-doodle, doo!" crowed Bumbur, while he ludicrously imitated the noble Dish-Thane, by the violent and threatening manner in which he drew forth and brandished his wooden sword. The partial laughter, which hailed this latter proceeding, was immediately drowned in the still more tempestuous outbreak of rage that succeeded. A bristling thicket of swords, ategars, and spears, gleamed, menacingly, on the despairing eyes of the doomed Chevaliers of the "Amaranth." Every instant appeared to be their last! The King, raising himself to the full height of his noble stature, waved his arm majestically for the exasperated and wildly-shouting nobles, and others, to fall back; and then motioned a similar command for silence. A stillness, like that of death, immediately prevailed.

"Vidric and Ulfnath," he exclaimed, fixing his dark eyes, flashing with fire, upon our unhappy adventurers, while his lofty brow became contracted and discoloured with passion, and his lip curved with an expression of unutterable disdain; "the work is yours. Speed, fellows. Deal with the foul and loathly enchanters as ye list; but let their base and cowardly carrion quiver beneath the fangs of my sleuth-hounds, and scatter their accursed bones to the four winds of heaven!"

A burst of enthusiastic applause accompanied by

the clash of shields and weapons greeted this terrible sentence; and the two sable functionaries that were stationed on the right and left of the throne then advanced, stretching forth their ponderous axes, as eager to anticipate each other in the fulfilment of the monarch's dire injunction. Again a breathless silence spread through the crowd. Not a shield, weapon, or ring of their war-weeds, stirred. Attention sealed up the lips of all.

"By Ochus Bochus (59)," at lengths queaked Bum-addressing with a quaint grimace his old friend and gossip, the dwarf with the gigantic skull cup, whom he complimented with the name of "Old Fustilugs;" "by Ochus Bochus, there'll be more 'pickle herrings (60)' than one, now. He, he, he! One looks like a squiz'd cat, and t'other like a mard in a lantern!"

"Hey for the 'Spread Eagle!'" shouted a host of voices in mingling tones of thunder.

"Eh-haw! Oh-e-oh!" squeaked the Jester, his shrill notes resembling those of the octave flute heard above the roll of the bass drum.

"Well screamed, 'Hawk-mouth,' well snuffled, 'Tallow-snout'—look to 't, 'Gubbertush'—limp forth, 'Rawbone.' Yo ho, yo ho, for the 'Spread Eagle!'"

"Whoop! Hallo! Hillio-ho! Yo ho, for the 'Blood-Owl!'"

Such were the confused cries that shook the de-

spairing ear of the unlucky *duo.* A wild, discordant laugh, and a terrific thundering of shields followed this jocose allusion to the cruel and inhuman torture inflicted by the barbarous invaders on their captives —namely, in cutting the form of an eagle on the back, applying a solution of salt to the mangled flesh, separating the sides from the back bone, and drawing out the lungs through the aperture (61). The Jester sprang upwards, twisting his arms and legs into a momentary assimilation of the form of a spread-eagle; a further intimation on the same subject which was well understood by the Antiquary and his associate. These incidents, which it has taken so much time to specify, passed, as the reader may well have suggested to himself, in the course of a few rapidly-fleeting moments; and while the wardens with their gleaming axes made their way, with some difficulty, through the crowd of curious and highly-excited gazers. We may also observe, that during the same interval, Sir Ernest Oldworthy's speech was annihilated, his companion's tongue clave to the roof of his mouth —every limb was paralyzed by the excess of terror; and they were thereby rendered incapable of appealing, by act or word, to the mercy of the royal party, or declaring their claims to the gratitude of all around them. We can no longer postpone the appalling issue of the adventure. The shrill cry of "O Seigneur Dieu!" from the Chevalier Dânskiölldr, drew Sir Ernest's shuddering gaze towards his unhappy col-

league; and the last faint glance of his failing vision was accosted by the grisly spectacle of the Philosopher's head spinning from his shoulders; while, from the stiffly-falling trunk a hideous jet of frothing gore deluged the executioner. A wildering pang of torturous despair shot, with the speed of lightning, from the heart to the brain of the Antiquary—a species of bewildered stupefaction closed over the powers of his mind; his limbs became convulsed, and he sank, half unconsciously, at the feet of the dreadful Askew. His shrinking ear yet retained with terrible distinctness the cry of horror that had burst from the lips of the agonizing Dánskiölldr, in the expectation of his awful fate—it rose above the stormy shouts and the din of the javelins on the brazen rims and bosses of the targets, that now bespoke the savage delight with which the decapitation of his unfortunate friend was regarded by that barbaresque assemblage. Striving, but vainly, to ejaculate a few syllables of prayer, he closed his fear-stricken eyes on the dismal scene of murder. At the next fatal instant, (alas! for the task of future historians to depict so sad, so tragical a catastrophe! "Hei mihi! non possum hoc sine lacrymis commemorare!" as Cicero might have pathetically observed,) the swiftly descending blow of a gigantic axe clave . . . . . not the skull of the devoted victim, but the spell of a wild and vivid dream, that had borne the agitated senses of the deceived patient through the singularly-varied scenes

of mystery, toil, delight, and terror, which have furnished such rich and picturesque materials for our humble narrative (62).

Right glad, we ween, was the heart of the worthy knight of Repingdon, when on recovering his perceptions, he found himself safely restored to his peaceful sofa. The cheerful wood fire was extinct, and the sole surviving lamp gave out its last, flickering ray, as he awoke; as if it but retained its feeble agency to afford him one consolatory glance at the friendly and familiar objects around him.

"'Fore gad," he exclaimed, "I am glad of my escape. I may say, with *Sir John Airy*, in the 'She Gallants,' 'Why, then, 'twas the oddest dream that ever I had in my life;'—and, thanks to my stars, I may also add, with *Vaunter*, in the same piece,—'Twas all a dream, that's certain.' But, zounds, I am 'left darkling,' like the *Fool*, in 'King Lear:'

> 'Strike on the tinder, ho!
> Give me a taper!'

As *Brabantio* says, in 'Othello.' Ah, those cursed, cursed lampreys—I may thank *them* for the fright of the closing scene; but, for the peep at the Saloon of Beauty, why, the vines of ancient Crete be blessed! But, hang 't, I forget—that curious elixir was a part of the *phantasma;* and oh, mournful reflection!—oh, 'desperate dolour!' my 'jollie deare Phylosopher,' my *comes jucundus*, my *alter ego*, was himself but an

imago fumosa, a mere *res creata animo*, a *non ens*, a *nemo scit*, born of the fumes of my Vino Tinto! Alack, and woe the while!—Alas, and alas! Ah, woe!—Bethinks me, however, I may exclaim, with *Morton*, in 'Henry the Fourth:'—

> 'What hath then befallen,
> Or what hath this bold enterprise brought forth,
> More than that being which was like to be?'

And, marry, now I think of it, my Vino Tinto was from La Mancha; and who shall say that it was not the growth of the old romance-inspiring *vina* of Don Quixote himself?"

Pressing the spring of his old-fashioned Genevese repeater, he ascertained that it was past four; and, after vainly seeking for the phosphoric apparatus to procure a light, he retired, amid the discomforting darkness, to his lodging-chamber. Ever and anon, however, did the almost stunning clash of the brass-bound bucklers, and the boding gleam of the Wardens' axes,—as associated so terrifically in his dreaming ear and vision,—assail each trembling nerve; nor did the oblivious solace of calm refreshing sleep visit his disturbed senses, until the radiant beams of morning had pierced the shadowy depths of the wintry heavens. The first few glimpses of that serene and tranquillizing lustre which aroused the latter from their turbid slumbers, invited him to seek the spell of needed repose; and the broad light of approaching noon had diffused itself over the [illegible] snow-covered expanse of "Askew Hill"

(the unconscious scene of his late perilous exploit!), ere he awoke from the placid enjoyment of his deferred rest. We have but to add, that with the first cheering sensations of recruited energy, vanished the last, lingering shadow of the night's alarm; even as this our marvellous and eventful story dies away on the listening ear.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BEING THE END OF THIS EVENTFUL HISTORY.

In sober state
He guileless held the tenor of his way.

PORTEUS.

Along the gentle slope of life's decline
He bent his gradual way, till full of years
He dropt like mellow fruit into the grave.

Idem.

SOL. And on his gravestone *this insculpture.*
Timon of Athens, Act v. sc. 5.

SITUATE beneath the ancient and venerable looking elms that overshadow the northern side of the beautiful church-yard of Repton, is a small sunken hillock which bears the traditional record of being the last earthly memorial of Ernest Oldworthy. The old channel of the Trent, endeared to the imagination of the lover of antiquity, as affording the early route of Saint Guthlac, on his famous expedition, glides peacefully at the foot of the green hill which contains this humble grave. The softly-murmuring sigh of the vernal or summer breeze, as it skims lightly over the rippling current; or the hoarser note of the au-

tumnal or wintry gale, as it sweeps with majestic force through the stalwart branches of the towering elms, seems to bear a plaintive remembrance of the past—an utterance of mournful regret for the "days of the years that are gone!" The verdant seclusion of this favoured nook is rarely or never disturbed by harsher sound than that which springs from the neighbouring rookery, in the nest-building season; when the clamorous tenants are involved in occasional strife, like the Danes and Saxons of old, to secure or retain possession of their respective rights or encroachments. At other times, the pleasant chime of the Sabbath, or evening bells, and the light carol of the happy birds from the adjacent priory gardens, combine their charmful greeting, and seem to waft a lulling spell of repose—a cheerful spirit of peace over the sacred solitude. The tall tower of the "Prior's Lodging," is not far distant, reminding the imaginative observer of the strange tale of supernatural wonder associated with it, in the far days of monastic superstition (63). The spot may also be noted, as a portion of a long chain of eminences, upon which it is traditionally asserted that the ancient Saxon city was built;—and, indeed, it may be recorded in favour of the popular report, that the characteristic termination of the name of Hreopan*dún*, points to such a locality rather than to the site of the present village. Nor must we, gentle reader, omit to mention, that the bones of the "high-battled" King Askew, *selon* the "Northern

Chronicles," in the Bibliotheca Oldworthiana, recline with those of his "noblest chiefs of hosts," and his "oldest and fiercest in war," within the half-cast of one of their ancient ategars, from the kindred spot where the remains of the Antiquary of Hreopandún are mingled with the soil he loved! At a short distance from the site in question was lately exhumed a broad two-edged sword, of very remote date, constituting a most characteristic memorial of the iron-age of Hreopandún, and which is preserved by the hand to which it most legitimately belongs—the hand that wields the pen whose office is to give back the faded glories of the Mercian era, as exhibited in these tributary pages. But to our narrative. When we contemplate the fierce and wild deeds of those Pagan warriors, and our mental eye recalls, in sympathy, the rushing tumult of the fiery feuds in which they loved to exist, how strangely touching is the feeling that salutes our heart, as we gaze around us, in this lonely and placid spot, and behold the silvery daisies blooming so peacefully above their bloody graves!

"Mark my hillock with the *simple flower!*" was the request of Beowulf, one of the wildly-wandering adventurers "over the dark ocean, through the waves of its seas." Thus, even those stern lovers of the storms of the deep—those desolating destroyers of the lives and homes of men, bore not, in their calmer moments, "a heart to nature dead!" And, while we contemplate the gentleness and repose which now reign

over their silent ashes, a tender sense of the all-beneficent power of "Him who judgeth the nations," must draw forth an involuntary prayer that their future being may accord with the calm and soothing tranquillity of this the last scene of their mortal pilgrimage. The murmured chant of the summer wind seems to reply as with the voice of an angelic host,—"Requiescant in pace! Amen, and amen!"

In this secluded spot had the Antiquary often mused away the sweetly-solemn hours of twilight; his exalted spirit rapt in delicious communings with those high and mysterious hopes that unite us so endearingly and blessedly with the loved of other years—*hopes* which, like those radiant and snow-white daisies now blossoming over his lonely grave, spread a living brightness, and a spell of softening power over the darkness and shadow of death!

Till the early part of the present century a small head-stone, partly enveloped with variegated ivy, marked the spot of Sir Ernest Oldworthy's last earthly abode. It was formed of a laminous kind of black limestone, and presented in the arched space of the upper part a cross florée in the centre of a quatrefoil, sculptured in bas relief. And it possessed in raised letters, rudely chiselled, and of Gothic type, the following characteristic inscription:—

Orate pro aia Ernesti Oldworthy, Equitis de Amaranto, Magistri Philosophiae Theoreticae, et Literarum Humaniorum Doctoris, necnon Regiae Societatis Londinensis Socii, qui ob. in Festo Sci Nicholai Epi, Aº Dni, mº dccxlvi 10 Cu. aie ppiciet^{r} De^{s} Am.

This brief and pathetic appeal, bearing sufficient evidence that it proceeded (with exception of the date) from the dictation of the Antiquary himself, was at length silenced by the jealous veto of canonical supervision. Prayers for the dead are forbidden by the received doctrine of our present church-establishment; yet, with an inconsistency sufficiently manifest, our litany petitions God to "remember not the offences of our forefathers," and our funeral service contains a passage bordering closely on a breach of this prohibition. It expresses a *hope* for the "weal of the departed;" and what is a hope, so expressed, but a prayer—a prayer for the soul of the dead? However this may be, it is certain that, according to the later doctrine of the Reformed Church, praying for the dead is viewed as a damnable heresy, and one of the foulest corruptions of the Church of Rome. And yet we would inquire, what can be more grateful or soothing to the heart of surviving affection, than to breathe an often-recurring prayer for the "eternal and everlasting joy" of those whose memory has inalienably associated itself with every scene and circumstance of our bereaved existence? We are told by St. Paul himself "not to be sorry, as men without *hope*, for them that sleep, &c.;" why, then, we ask, may not that hope accompany our prayers, as indeed we have shewn that it does in one of the most solemn rites of our religious worship? Holy and wise examples might, we believe, be cited amongst those *who had authority in the Pro-*

testant Church, in favour of this natural privilege; and we confess that if there be superstition or weakness in such an "expression of faith and love—faith in God, and enduring love for the departed," it is a superstition which we have often committed—a weakness which we have often experienced; and an inward voice, whose promptings are far more powerful than the problematical inferences on which the prohibition of such prayers is grounded, tells us that, despite the dictation of "our school-authors," we shall still persist in what we have long esteemed a privilege sanctioned by the most sacred and sublime authority, namely—the words of St. Paul himself. If we are enjoined—specially enjoined to *hope* for the dead, we may surely be permitted to *pray* for them.

Let it be understood, however, that we are no believers in the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory; (that fire which, as the *naïf* old historian, Dr. Fuller, says, "heats the Pope's kitchen;") but that we are of the number of those who would not limit the overflowings of Divine mercy; and who, believing in a "day of final consummation of all things," and not in an instantaneous and separate judgment of each individual soul on its departure from the mortal flesh; are impressed with a thankful sense of the blessed intermediate permission that such prayers shall be recorded; and that on the last great day—the day of general resurrection and judgment—they shall be remembered with those of the "saints,"

which are typically described by our Lord's most beloved disciple, as "odours" in "golden vials," preserved by the four-and-twenty elders "made unto our God kings and priests," who "shall reign on the *earth* (64)!" But this is not the place wherein to enlarge upon a topic connecting itself with the deep, mysterious, and imperfectly-understood revelations of Deity. The hour is not yet arrived, when the great vision of Patmos shall be disclosed and made manifest; for it abounds with cryptical truths that are not yet necessary to be divulged to our more intimate knowledge. But the time will assuredly come—nay, perhaps, is not far distant—when its wonderful and important particulars shall be as fully explained and verified as the other mysteries of divine revelation, which are so miraculously brought home to our understanding and experience.

But, to return to our narrative. The Antiquary's abode, like the "halls of Hleidra," has long since passed away; and its very site is forgotten save by a few gentler spirits that love to blend—as we have elsewhere written—

> The dim, decaying glories of the past,

with

> The brighter tints of life's still changeful day.

Of Sir Ernest Oldworthy's declining years we have but to add that they glided away in the undisturbed enjoyment of his visions of past ages; and that when

the last solemn moment of dissolving nature drew nigh, his lively faith in the blissful ordinances of Divine mercy associated itself with the abiding impressions of the "ruling passion," and he expired, as he had lived, with the characteristic hope of being eternally united in august yet familiar companionship with the heroes, sages, patriots, and beauties, whose memories he had so fervently cherished. His mind, indeed, was even still more ardently impressed in his later moments, with the reigning influence of those ties which had connected him with the "great and good of every age;" and in whose actual living society, as we have said, he then hoped to mingle. And he would comfort himself with the glorious idea of conversing with the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and saints—of gazing upon the eternal splendours of the "mansions of the most High;" nay, of looking upon Him who bears the lofty and most sublime appellation of "The Ancient of Days," and in whose sight "a thousand years are but as yesterday; seeing that is past like a watch in the night." Nor, to speak sooth, were the dying anticipations of the illustrious Socrates forgotten. "Is it nothing to converse with Orpheus, Musæus, Homer, and Hesiod? Believe me I would cheerfully suffer many a death on the condition of realizing such a privilege. With what pleasure could I leave the world to hold communion with Palamedes, Ajax, and others. Then would I explore the wisdom of Ulysses and Sisyphus, and that illus-

trious chief who led out the vast forces of the Grecian army against the city of Troy." As one quotation often suggests another, we are here reminded of the lines of Pope, that paint the happy death-bed of one whose life had been passed like Sir Ernest Oldworthy's, in the pleasures of a virtuous retirement.

> "Thus wisely careless, innocently gay,
> Cheerful, he play'd the trifle, life, away;
> Till fate scarce felt his gentle breath supprest,
> As smiling infants sport themselves to rest."

Not that we consider life to be a trifle which may be played away, or believe that there is such a being or thing as *fate*; but the passage may suffice to shew that our estimable friend pursued a life of serene and intellectual enjoyment, adorned with the practice of every good work; and that its latest hours were past in that calm state of happy tranquillity which can only result from a spirit impressed with the gracious promises of the gospel, and with a conviction that "being justified by faith in Jesus Christ, we have peace with God."

> "Sic mihi contingat *vivere*, sicque *mori*!"

And be thou our kind witness, gentle reader, that—

> "When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,"

and nature demands, in our own humble instance, the realization of that admonitory truth—"Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return!" it is in the congenial sanctuary of the retired spot which we have

pointed out as the last earthly resting-place of Ernest Oldworthy, that our own remains would crave to be deposited; with no other memorial of our fellowship with the rustic dead than a simple head-stone, bearing the seventh verse of the "Benedixisti, Domine"—"Shew us thy mercy, O Lord: and grant us thy salvation." *

* Since writing this work, a far dearer and more solemn motive has confirmed the desire thus sentimentally or fancifully expressed; the situation alluded to having been indeed rendered a "congenial sanctuary," to the feelings of the narrator, through its reception of the tenderly-beloved remains of one of the noblest, most refined, and most honourable of human beings—the most affectionate, most true-hearted, and most endeared of wives—of one whose memory and example, while they shed a hallowing influence over the present, must always conciliate the deepest reverence for the happy years for ever gone! for those too early vanished days which drew their chief brightness from the beamy charmfulness of her smile—days which looked rejoicingly upon the pureness, gentleness, and devotedness of her truly Christian—yea, *Christ-like* spirit; days which saw, with prolonged delight, her ever-continued watchfulness for the occasions of solace and sympathy. The *past!* Oh, theme of sweetly-solemn meditation! Oh, name of exquisitely-mournful utterance! I can no longer regard the traditions of remote eras with the imaginative interest of the poet—with the curious passion of the "Antiquarian Enthusiast." No! I feel more sensibly, hour by hour, how much I must henceforward live within the narrow sphere of individual associations and personal recollections; regarding, as a man only, the more limited experiences and teachings of my own heart in relation to the "days which are no more," and bowing to the force of those circumstances which have alienated the spirit from all its former share of romantic and ideal perceptions, its dreamy and fantastic aspirations, its wild and awe-awakening worship of the mystic divinity that presided over the eternity of the ages that are gone.

Hence, "Visions of the Times of Old!" I have broken the wand that called you up from the depths of an ethereal vacancy. I may gaze no longer on your seducing pleasures—no longer own the charmed enthralment of your mysterious influences. Yes!—I must henceforward exist only as one who, having lost the cherished hopes that made life a dream of unvaried happiness, turns aside from the darkened prospect of bereavement, as well as from the vaguely indulged recreations of an erratic fancy, and seeks to behold, though but in the airy pictures of memory, the fondly-idolized treasures of soul which made blessed the serene hours of days that can no more return; of years that are albeit written with a pencil of diamond light on the shadowy tablet of the past; that breathe a perfumed sweetness over the fleeting moments of the present; and that ally themselves, as with a spell of seraphic glory, to scenes of endless rapture diversifying the ages—the long, nightless ages, of a blest and boundless hereafter!—to the unimaginable blisses and transports prospectively illuminating the great and eternal future.

NOTES TO PART VIII.

(1.) Monsieur Le Cat, a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Rouen, in 1756, published a paper on this subject, in which he mentioned several remarkable instances of the phenomenon,—as the finding of two worms in the centre of a block of marble, by the statuary of the King of Spain : a crayfish in the centre of a piece of marble, near Tivoli, and a number of frogs at Guadeloupe, in the rock through which the King's physician there was digging for water. At Cassel, about this period, in a stone quarry, three toads were discovered lying together in a cavity of the rock : they were at first quite lively, but died in half an hour. Of the discovery of single toads in large blocks of stone, the instances are so numerous, that it would be tedious to state them all, or any considerable number of them. In all cases, the animal appeared torpid at first, but speedily became reanimated, and lived for a little while, usually about an hour, but sometimes for a much longer space. A recent writer observes, that notwithstanding the numerous cases of the discovery of stone-inclosed toads, which have been from time to time laid before the public, many naturalists in modern times have professed not to be convinced that such a thing is possible in nature. Sir Joseph Banks was of this number : he said, that in his whole life he never, with all pains, could trace such a tradition or account to any credible authority, so that it could be recorded as a fact. In consideration of this incredulity, and to set the bare question of possibility at rest, the Rev. Mr. Comber, rector of Oswaldkirk, near Brough, in Westmoreland, was at the pains to obtain a regular affidavit before a magistrate, respecting the find-

ing of a frog in a huge block of millstone grit on Stainmoor, by four men engaged in repairing a highway. This event took place on the 25th July, 1832. The whole document is printed at length in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1834. I may observe that a new feature has been recently added to this curious subject, by the discovery; near Tideswell, Derbyshire, of a live toad, imbedded in a block of stone containing fossil remains of the ammonite and other antediluvian animals. It died soon after its removal. "About ten days ago," says the *Derby Mercury* of April 30, 1845, "two living leeches were found in a block of coal in a mine sixty yards deep, at the Birchills, Walsall, Staffordshire. They died in a few days." I have twice inspected toads discovered alive in the centre of blocks of coal, in the pits at Wollaton, near Nottingham.

(2.) It is Mr. Sharon Turner's opinion, (and a higher authority cannot be cited,) that gold and silver were used, in the concerns of life, in an uncoined state, by the Anglo-Saxons. He considers, too, that the two sorts of pennies were the only coins they possessed above their copper coinage; and is induced to regard all their other denominations of money as weighed or settled quantities of uncoined metal.

(3.) "Let every man," says Sir Hugh Platt, writing in the days when alchemy was still an art that flourished with its more unprincipled professors, and with a design to expose the cheats of such gross impostors, "let every man that is besotted in this art, and depends wholly on other men's practices (himself not being sufficiently acquainted with those great and hidden maximes of Nature), take heed of all false and double bottoms in crusibles, of all hollow wands, or rods of iron, wherewith some of these varlets do use to stir the metal and the medicine together, of all amalgames, or powders, wherein any gold or silver shall be craftily conveyed, or Sol or Luna, first rubified, and then projection made on it, as if it were on Venus herself: but specially of a false back to the chimney or furnace, having a loose brick or stone closely jointed, that may be taken away in another room by a false

Sinon that attendeth on the Alchimist's hem, or some other such like watch-word, who, after the medicine and the mercury put together in the crusible, entertaineth Balbinus with a walk, and with the volubility of his tongue, until his confederate might have leisure to convey some gold or silver into the melting pot, which were able to deceive the best-sighted Argus in the world!"

(4.) Ancharius continued to be worshipped, as the tutelary saint of the Northern nations, until the period of the Reformation, and still merits their reverence and gratitude as their deliverer from a bloody and barbarous superstition, and a benefactor who opened to them the career of civilization.—WHEATON.

(5.) St. Olaf, king of Norway, and a zealous supporter of Christianity, usually receives the credit of having overturned the Scandinavian form of religion. In the course of his efforts to christianize his subjects, he ordered a statue of Thor, and the pedestal on which it stood, to be broken in pieces, and shewed the people that the meat which had been laid down for the use of the god was not eaten by him, but by a host of rats and other vermin that had formed a lodgment about the foundation of the colossal image.—WHEATON.

(6.) St. Ludgar, a Frisic missionary, who died in 809. He destroyed the temples of Fosete.

(7.) The name of this saint, although unrecorded in the Kalendar, appeared on an ancient grave-stone discovered at Repton, in 1740. It is alluded to by Davies, in his "Historical and Descriptive View of Derbyshire."

(8.) For many highly-curious remarks on the subject of the perpetual lamps of the ancients, the reader whom such an enquiry may interest, is referred to Bishop Wilkins's now rather scarce volume on "Natural and Mathematical Magic." Dr. Robert Plot, in his "History of Oxfordshire," details, also, various ingenious arguments respecting them; and, if my memory does not err, the

"Encyclopœdia Edinburgensis," has a copiously-illustrative article on the same topic. The story of Rosicrucius's sepulchre, in the "Spectator," may here be cited for its amusing connection with this great traditionary marvel. "I shall conclude this paper with the story of Rosicrucius's sepulchre. I suppose I need not inform my readers that this man was the founder of the Rosicrucian sect, and that his disciples still pretend to new discoveries, which they are never to discover to the rest of mankind. A certain person having occasion to dig somewhat deep in the ground, where this philosopher lay interred, met with a small door having a wall on each side of it. His curiosity, and the hopes of finding some hidden treasure, soon prompted him to force open the door. He was immediately surprised by a sudden blaze of light, and discovered a very fair vault: at the upper end of it was a statue of a man in armour sitting by a table, and leaning on his left arm. He held a truncheon in his right hand, and had a lamp burning before him. The man had no sooner set one foot within the vault, than the statue, erecting itself from its leaning posture, stood bolt upright; and upon the fellow's advancing another step, lifted up the truncheon in its right hand. The man still ventured a third step, when the statue, with a furious blow, broke the lamp into a thousand pieces, and left his guest in a sudden darkness. Upon the report of this adventure, the country people soon came with lights to the sepulchre, and discovered that the statue, which was made of brass, was nothing more than a piece of clock-work; that the floor of the vault was all loose, and underlaid with several springs, which, upon any man's entering, naturally produced that which had happened. Rosicrucius, say his disciples, made use of this method, to shew the world that he had re-invented the ever-burning lamps of the ancients, though he was resolved no one should reap any advantage from the discovery."

(9.) See Present Notes, No. 53.

(10.) For a description of this chief of the Northern demons, see Present Notes, No. 55.

(11.) For chefe—chief.

(12.) Pigment was one of the richest and most delicious liquors of those times, and so much admired, both in England and on the continent, that it was commonly called nectar. It was a sweet and odoriferous liquor, made of honey, wine, and spiceries of various kinds.

(13.) Morat was esteemed a delicacy, and was found only at the tables of the great. It was made of honey, diluted with the juice of mulberries.

(14.) A drinking-vessel, of a certain number of thumbs in breadth.

(15.) "The ranger of the darksome night,
The fire-drake came."

Mr. Coneybeare, in his analysis of an A. S. MS., has the following note under this passage :—"This race of reptiles, formed, doubtless, by a poetical exaggeration of the real attributes of the larger serpents inhabiting Southern Asia—the cradle at once of the original colonists of Europe, and of the original materials of those fictions which subsequent ages but reproduced under varied combinations—has ever constituted a prominent feature in romantic narrative. The names by which it is described in the present poem are Wyrm and Draca, with the compounds Fir-draca, Earth-draca, Earth-scrafa, the "digger of the earth;" and the epithets derived from its imputed habits, Hordes-weard, the "guardian of the treasure;" and Beorges-weard, the "guardian of the mountain." Names, evidently derived from the same roots, are found in all the Teutonic dialects.'—P. 164.

(16.) "In those ages," observes Mr. Adams, in his interesting little work illustrative of the History of Great Britain, [p. 70,] "the people of Scandinavia, comprehending the kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, breathed nothing but war, and were animated with a most astonishing spirit of enterprise and adventure. By their numerous fleets, they rode triumphant in all the European seas, carrying terror and desolation to the

coasts of Germany, France, Spain, Italy, England, Scotland, and Ireland. The inhabitants of all these countries, especially of the sea-coast, lived in continual apprehensions of those dreadful enemies; and it made a part of their daily prayers to be preserved by Providence from their destructive visits. Born in fleets or in camps, the first objects on which they fixed their eyes, were arms, storms, battles, blood, and slaughter. Nursed and brought up in the midst of these terrible objects, they by degrees became familiar, and at length delightful to them. Their childhood and their dawn of youth were wholly spent in running, leaping, climbing, swimming, wrestling, boxing, fighting, and such exercises as hardened both their souls and bodies, and disposed and fitted them for the toils of war. As soon as they began to lisp, they were taught to sing the exploits and victories of their ancestors; their memories were stored with nothing but tales of warlike and piratical expeditions, of defeating their enemies, burning cities, plundering provinces, and of the wealth and glory acquired by brave exploits. With such an education, it was no wonder that their youthful hearts began to beat high with martial ardour; and that they early became impatient to grasp the sword and spear, and to mingle with their fathers, brothers, and companions, in the bloody conflict. It was one of their martial laws, "that a Dane who wished to acquire the character of a brave man, should always attack two enemies, stand firm and receive the attack of three, retire only one pace from four, and flee from no fewer than five." It need scarcely be added, that their deportment was stern and haughty, and their address rude and unpolished.

(17.) By the Welch, as also by the Irish, the Danes were called the "Black Men," or the "Black Strangers." The origin of this appellation is not well ascertained. Perhaps it arose from the colour of their garments or armour.—PALGRAVE. It may here be remarked, that the Norwegians were termed by the Irish, the "White Strangers;" a circumstance which of course Sir Francis Palgrave, to maintain the consistency of his opinion, would attribute to their garments or armour being of that colour.

"It was in the year 838," says an intelligent writer in that very interesting and ably-conducted periodical, the "Dublin Penny Journal," "that the 'Northmen' first invaded this country. They entered the Liffey with a fleet of sixty sail, and took possession of Dublin. The *dubh-gæl* (the 'dark strangers'), or Danes, possessed themselves of the southern parts, and the *fion-gæl* ('white strangers'), or Norwegians, extended themselves northward." Sir Francis Palgrave's hypothesis concerning the origin of the epithet alluded to, does not appear altogether satisfactory, when we consider the fact just stated. Another writer, in the same journal, informs us that the epithets of "black" and "white," thus used, referred to the complexions of the "strangers." "The Norwegian and other Scandinavian tribes," says he, "who visited this country from the 8th [9th ?] to the 11th century, were frequently distinguished by the name of Gauls or foreigners, and sometimes different tribes had particular names from their complexions. Hence, we find mention of Dubh-Gâlls, and Fion-Gâlls, *i. e.* black or white, foreigners, or strangers." It does not seem likely, however, that there could have existed so remarkable a physical difference between these joint inhabitants of the Northern countries of Europe, as to have suggested the application of such strongly-contrasted epithets. To the epithet of black, thus employed, I once attached a metaphorical meaning; since we have evidence that the Danes were attired in garments of the various hues described in the text; while the colour of black is by the imagination of all times and countries associated with the qualities which convey terror and grief—emotions that would very naturally arise at the sight or recollection of these barbarous ravagers. But the opposite distinction of white, as applied to the Norwegians, deprived this supposition of its previous show of probability. [Quœre—Did the difference of black and white canvas in the material of their sails, or the thus opposite colours of the hulls, or masts, of their vessels, cause the distinction ?] Feeling anxious to form a clear impression on the subject, by the aid of some more competent authority than the limited range of my acquaintance with those who had made the Irish history their study, supplied a reference to, I ventured to

ask Sir William Betham's kind assistance, in a communication very respectfully couched; but with an apparently strange neglect of the courtesy so ordinarily evinced by literary men in their mutual correspondence with each other, on points of common investigation, the learned Ulster King of Arms did not accord the civility of a reply.

(18.) The *berserkir* originally formed a particular class of warriors in the North, who were distinguished by their habitual display of a sort of rabid fury resembling the rage of the more ferocious wild beasts. "These men," as Mr. Turner records in his History, "when a conflict impended, or a great undertaking was to be commenced, abandoned all rationality upon system; they studied to resemble wolves or maddening dogs; they bit their shields; they howled like tremendous beasts; they threw off covering; they excited themselves to a strength which has been compared to that of bears, and then rushed to every crime and horror which the most frantic enthusiasm could perpetrate. This fury was an artifice of battle, like the Indian war-whoop. Its object was to intimidate the enemy. It is attested that the unnatural excitation was, as might be expected, always followed by a complete debility. It was originally practised by Odin. They who used it often joined in companies. The *furor Berserkicus*, as mind and morals improved, was at length felt to be horrible. It changed from a distinction to a reproach, and was prohibited by penal laws. The name at length became execrable." The term *Bersœrker* is derived from *ber*, bare, and *sœrker*, a garment, and presented an allusion to their habit of fighting naked, or without armour.—See Depping, "Hist. des Norm.," c. 2. Subsequently, the appellation seems to have been used to represent combatants of powerful and ferocious character retained as champions, or as a portion of the body-guard, of the sovereign; and in this sense it applies to the passage connected with the present note.

(19.) The horse-whale is mentioned in Alfred's account of the voyage of Othere towards the North Pole, and of the voyage of Wulfstan in the Baltic. It is stated that the hides are very good

for ship ropes. I do not read of their having been used for the purpose described in the text, but their application to such a process of manufacture is very probable.

(20.) The payments mentioned in Domesday-book are stated in pounds, shillings, pence, and farthings, exactly as our calculations are now made. The Saxon money was sometimes reckoned by pennies, as the French money is now by *livres.* The name for money, which is oftenest met with in the charters, is the *mancus.* The *mancus* appears to have been of the value of six shillings. It is clear that there were two sorts of pennies, the greater and the less. The *mark* is sometimes mentioned ; this was half a pound. The money mentioned in our earliest law consists of shillings, and a minor sum called *scætta.* In Alfred's treaty with the Danes, the *half-mark* of gold, and the *mancus,* are the names of the money ; as is the *ora* in the Danish compact with Edward. In the laws of Athelstan, we find the *thrymsa,* as well as the shilling and the penny ; the *scætta* and the *pund.* In the charters we find *sicli* mentioned. In one we find one hundred *sicli* of the purest gold ; and in another, four hundred *sicli* in pure silver. That the pound was used as an imaginary value of money, is undoubted. No Anglo-Saxon gold coins have reached modern times. Of their silver coinage we have numerous specimens. For much curious learning on this interesting subject, the reader may consult Mr. Turner's elaborate and most comprehensive "History of the Anglo-Saxons," from which the above information is compiled in an abridged form, as sufficient for the purpose of the present note.

(21.) Death song.

(22.) A Saxon Venus has been mentioned ; she is exhibited as standing naked in a car, with myrtle round her head, a lighted torch in her breast, and the figure of the world in her right hand. —Turner.

(23.) The Anglo-Saxons and Danes long retained their fondness for bathing in warm water. In the laws of the former people, the warm bath is always considered as one of the necessaries of life ;

and no less indispensable than victuals, drink, or clothing. One of the most common penances enjoined by the canons of the church in those days, to such as had been guilty of great sins, was, to abstain for a certain time from the warm bath, and to give victuals, drink, clothes, firing, bath, and beds, to a certain number of poor people. On the other hand, they had a very great aversion to bathing in cold water, which was therefore enjoined as a penance.—"A New History of Great Britain," by the Rev. JOHN ADAMS, A.M., p. 73.

(24.) In describing a Roman edifice, I should have termed this portion of its interior the *atrium* or *aula,* the court or hall, which appears to have been a large oblong square, surrounded, occasionally, with covered or arched galleries. Three sides of the *atrium* were supported on pillars composed, in later times at least, of marble. This apartment was adorned with pictures, statues, and other works of art. The *vestibulum* of the Romans was not properly a part of the house, but an empty space before the gate, through which there was an access to it. [GELL. 16, 5. CIC. Cæc. 12. PLAUT. Most. 3, 130.] We read that the vestibule of the golden palace of Nero was so large, that it contained three porticoes, a mile long each, and a pond like a sea, surrounded with buildings like a city. [SUET. Ner. 30.] Here was also a colossus of himself, one hundred and twenty feet in height. The term vestibule, in a modern sense, corresponds with the use I have made of it in the text.

(25.) That I have read of this mode of occasional illumination in some ancient Northern romance, or history, is a fact of which I am fully certain, though I cannot immediately discover the source whence I derived the suggestion. I have introduced the practice of it, in the present instance, in connection with the celebration of the Festival of the Sun, an annual commemoration in honour of Odin, the chief god of the Scandinavian mythology. It is not improbable, I think, that the variously-hued coruscations of the aurora borealis, which were believed to proceed from the disclosed forms of the Hyperborean deities to their worshippers, might have

suggested the preparation of these curiously-artificial lights, and directed their use to be limited to occasions of unusual solemnity. A modern instance of the adaptation of this ancient art to the purpose of an august public ceremony, appears in an account of the re-interment, at Paris, of the remains of Napoleon. Around the *catafalque,* in addition to a number of lustres, there were sixteen funeral urns, whence issued flames of different colours. The effect, the writer adds, was at once gorgeous and solemn.

(26.) Hell; so named in the Ancient British, or Celtic mythology.

(27.) The Runic characters were used for inscriptions on arms, trinkets, amulets, utensils, and buildings, and occasionally on the bark of trees, or wooden tablets, for the purpose of memorials, or epistolary correspondence.

(28.) Kirtle.

(29.) Mantle.

(30.) Drayton, in his "Legend of Matilda."

(31.) This appellation was borne by Editha, the beautiful mistress of Harold.

(32.) The troubadours of Germany.

(33.) Author of two Latin epic poems on the Trojan war, and the war of Antioch, which are read with pleasure even in the present day.

(34.) The tooth of the narwal, or unicorn fish, was formerly called whale-bone.

(35.) Jewels.

(36.) Jars, or like vessels, in which they put new wine, dried fruit, &c. It may here be observed that, deriving our chief knowledge of the various articles in use amongst the Anglo-Saxons from the Latin writings of Bede and others, we are often unacquainted

with the relative appellations which they would bear in the Anglo-Saxon tongue. These *orcas*, though thus referred to under a Latin name, were often of Grecian workmanship, and doubtless relics of the Roman luxury in Britain. Many of the drinking vessels of the Danes appear to have been derived from Spain, a country frequently visited in their maritime expeditions.

(37.) A kind of helmet.

(38.) Armour to cover the neck and breast.

(39.) A shirt of mail, composed of rings of iron or steel.

(40.) A noble.

(41.) An office answering to the *comes stabuli* of the Romans.

(42.) Let not the reader smile at the apparently humble nature of this high dignitary's functions. In an age of great simplicity, like that referred to, no inconsistency was dreamed of in such a combination of usefulness with the more showy and ostentatious display of greatness. The office of chief smith was esteemed of much honour and importance in those times of almost constant warfare, and established for its holder a high claim to precedency in the courts of the Saxon and Danish monarchs. It is recorded by Eginhard, in his "Life of the Emperor Charlemagne," that the daughters of that illustrious potentate were assiduously employed in spinning and housewifery.

(43.) The "Belted Apple" (the standard of Upland) may here be considered as the memorial of some Swedish leader, who accompanied the Saxons in their earlier invasions (and of the mixture of northern adventurers with that people we have direct evidence), while the "Snow-white Steed" (the ensign of Hengist and Horsa), may be supposed to constitute a trophy of the subjection of Kent to the sway of Mercia, which took place in the reign of Kenulph, anno 805.

(44.) Friga, or Frigga, was the daughter and wife of Odin, and, next to him, the most revered divinity among the heathen Saxons, Danes, and other northern nations. In the most ancient times, Friga was the same with the goddess Hertha, or "Earth." To her the sixth day of the week was consecrated, which by the Saxons was written *Frig-dæg*, or Friga's day, corresponding with our Friday. She is represented with a drawn sword in her right hand, and a bow in her left. This deity, the Scandinavian Juno, was the bestower of fertility and plenty. The following particulars are added from the notes to Mr. Strong's translation of "Frithiof's Saga," p. 14. "The beloved spouse of Odin, majestic and dignified as Juno: she shares with this chief and parent of the *Æsir* his throne, Hlidskialf, the 'tremulous portal,' *i. e.*, the clouds, whence they survey the entire world. She is versed in the language of the vegetable and animal creation, understands the mysteries of nature, and foresees the destinies of mortals, but reveals the future to no ear. Orion's belt is her rock. In her train are three lovely virgins: the soft-smiling Fulla, 'Perfection,' who has the care of her sandals and trinkets; Gná, 'Grace,' the northern Iris, her messenger, who rides with the beams of the sun; Hlyn, 'Favour,' the tutelary nymph of Friendship."

(45.) Tuisco, or Tiw, was first deified as the father and ruler of the Teutonic race, but, in course of time, he was worshipped as the son of the earth. From him came the Saxon words *Tiwes-dæg*, or Tiw's-day, which we call Tuesday. He is represented, standing on a pedestal, as an old venerable sage, clothed with the skin of an animal, and holding a sceptre in his right hand. Tuesday is, by some, supposed to be taken from Tisa, the wife of Thor, and the reputed goddess of justice. It was anciently written Tiesday, a pronunciation which we learn, from an interesting and able article, in "Chambers' Edinburgh Journal," on the superstitions of the Anglo-Saxons, is still preserved in Scotland.

(46.) The idol Seater was represented on a pedestal, whereon

was placed a perch, on the sharp, prickled back of which he stood. His head was uncovered and his visage lean. In his left hand he held up a wheel, and in his right hand was a pail of water, wherein were flowers and fruits, and his dress consisted of a long coat girded with linen. The appellation given to the day of his celebration is still retained. The Saxons named it *Seater-dæg*, or Seater's day, which we call Saturday. He seems to have resembled the Saturn of the Greeks.

(47.) Niörd, the god of the sea, was an important deity of the north. Frey, his son, was the god of rain. Freia, or Freya, his daughter, was the Venus of Asgard and the patroness of matrimony. Freia was assisted in her duties by Siona and Sofna, the first of whom made lovers fruitful, while the other reconciled them when they quarrelled.

(48.) This idol represented the glorious luminary of the day. It is described like the bust of a man, set upon a pillar, holding, with outstretched arms, a burning wheel before his breast. The first day of the week was especially dedicated to its adoration, which they termed *Sunnan-dæg*, or the Sun's day; hence is derived the word Sunday.

(49.) The idol of the Moon was worshipped on the second day of the week, called by the Saxons *Monan-dæg*, or the Moon's day, and since by us Monday. The form of this idol is intended to represent a woman, habited in a short coat and a hood with two long ears. The moon which she holds in her hand designates the quality.

(50.) Braga, or Bragi, in his general qualities, resembled the Apollo of the Greeks, the god of eloquence and poetry. He is thus described by a distinguished writer:—"The sonorous, the fourth son of Odin and Frigga; the god of poetry and music, of wisdom and eloquence. He is not, however, represented, like the classical Apollo, in the bloom and smiles of youth, but with a look sedate and venerable, a form already on the confines of senility, yet extorting respect and inspiring affection. Wrinkles and

corrugations, in each of which sage experience seems to lie imbedded, overspread his lofty brow; an ample beard casts around his countenance an awe-inspiring shade; his stature is tall and majestic. He draws the flood of poesy which streams from his lips out of the fount of Mimer, for to him alone and Odin has it been permitted to taste of that well of knowledge. A multitude of mysterious *runes* are, moreover, engraven upon his tongue, imparting to every effusion, whether prosaic or poetical, irresistible fascination."—HACHMEISTER. *Nord. Myth.*, as quoted by Mr. Strong, in the notes to his translation of "Frithiof's Saga."

(51.) Rheda, a goddess to whom they sacrificed in March, which, from her rites, received the appellation of *Rhed-monath.*

(52.) Eostre is alluded to by Bede, who informs us that her festivities were celebrated in April, which thence obtained the name of *Eostre monath.* "Her name," Mr. Sharon Turner remarks, "is still retained to express the season of our great paschal solemnity, and thus the memory of one of the idols of our ancestors."

(53.) "The idol adored in Heligland, one of the islands originally occupied by the Saxons, was Fosete, who was so celebrated that the place became known by his name; it was called Fosetesland. Temples were there built to him, and the country was deemed so sacred, that none dared to touch any animal which fed on it, nor to draw water from a fountain which flowed there, unless in awful silence. In the eighth century, Willebrord, a converted Anglo-Saxon, born in Northumbria, who, under the auspices of his uncle Boniface, went missionary to Friesland, endeavoured to destroy the superstition, though Radbod, the fierce king of the island, devoted to a cruel death all who violated it. Willebrord, fearless of the consequences, baptized three men in the fountain, invoking the Trinity, and caused some cattle who were feeding there to be killed for the food of his companions. The surrounding pagans expected them to have been struck dead or insane."—TURNER's *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. i. pp. 215, 216.

(54.) Hertha, a goddess, whom, as we learn from Tacitus, they called "Mother Earth." He tells us, that in an island in the ocean there was a grove, within which was a vehicle covered with a garment, which it was permitted to the priest alone to touch. The goddess was presumed to be within it, and was carried, by cows, with great veneration. Joy, festivity, and hospitality were then universal. Wars and weapons were forgotten, and peace and quiet reigned, then only known, then only loved, until the priest returned the goddess to her temple, satiated with mortal converse. The vehicle, the garment, and the goddess herself were washed in a secret lake. Slaves ministered, who were afterwards drowned.

(55.) Under this the last note illustrative of the superstitions of our Scandinavian and Teutonic ancestors, may be briefly enumerated such of the yet unmentioned deities and other mythic personages as we find noticed under various authorities. The Saxon name for a goddess, Mr. Turner remarks, was *gydena*, and as the word is applied as a proper name instead of Vesta, [see Saxon Dictionary, *voc.* GYDENA,] it is not unlikely that they had a peculiar divinity so named. They dreaded an evil being whom they named Faul. That Faul might not hurt was part of one of their exorcisms. [See Saxon Dictionary *voc.* Faul.] The continental Saxons respected the lady Hera, a fancied being, who was believed to fly about in the air in the week after their *Jule*, or between our Christmas and Epiphany. Abundance was thought to follow her visit. [GOBELIN *ap.* MEIBOM. *Irminsula*, p. 12.] Hilde, one of their terms for battle, seems to allude to a war-goddess of that name. Hama, Flinnus, Siba, and Zernebogus, or the black, malevolent, ill-omened deity, are said to have occupied part of their superstitions, but we cannot be answerable for more than their names [FABRICIUS, *Hist. Sax.* p. 62.] There were two personages feared in the North, whom we may mention here, as words from their names have become familiar to ourselves; one was Ochus Bochus, a magician and demon; the other was Neccus, a malign deity who frequented the waters. If any perished in whirlpools, or by cramp, or bad swimming, he was thought to be

seized by Neccus. Steel was supposed to expel him, and therefore all who bathed threw some little pieces of steel in the water for that purpose. [VERELIUS, *Suio-Goth.* p. 13.] Verstigan describes the idol Flynt as the image of death in a sheet, holding a torch, and placed on a great flint-stone. He was also represented as a man in a great cloak, with a lion on his head and shoulders, and carrying a torch. His figure was sometimes more deformed with monstrous feet. [MONTF., *Ant. Exp.* c. 10.] Loki, or Loké, was the head or chief of the demons, the combined impersonation of malice and subtlety—the deceiver and tormentor – in fact, the Devil of the Scandinavians. He was the foster-brother of Odin, and for a time highly esteemed by the *Æsir* or gods. He is represented in the *Eddas* as possessing an angelic form, by the aid of whose attractions he more easily secured his designs against the welfare of others. His cruel and atrocious exploits fill a wide space in the mythic records. It is he who, like Satan in the garden of Eden, beguiles Iduna, the possessor of the apples of immortality, out of the Northern paradise, Asgard. And, in like manner as the representative of evil in our own creed, is held to be perpetually going about "seeking whom he may devour," and endeavouring to countermine and destroy the beneficent work of the Almighty, so did this restless fiend make it his perpetual business to thwart and undo the good contrived or executed by Odin. His chief attribute was a far-seeing cunning, with which was associated a kind of sportive humour—the latter assimilating his character in some degree to that of the Momus of the Greeks, or the Puck of the fairy mythology. Loki was the parent of the great serpent, personifying the Deluge; and of Hela, the goddess representing Death. The account of his subsequent punishment is thus graphically conveyed to us in the Notes to Mr. Strong's Translation of Bishop Tegnér's beautiful poem, "Frithiof's Saga." "The fable of his punishment, horrible as it is, deserves to be introduced, as supplying a curious proof how many centuries the Scottish bard had been anticipated in the favourable testimony :—'

'But when affliction rends the brow,
A ministering angel thou.'

"Secured upon a rock which sustains him on three acute *apices*, by ligaments composed of the entrails of his own offspring, he would be exposed to a perpetual guttulous descent of burning venom from a poisonous serpent suspended over his face, did not his wife Siguna, notwithstanding his former infidelity, remain constantly seated by his side, holding a vessel with which she intercepts the falling drops. It is only during the interval whilst she empties the overflowing vase, that his flesh receives the caustic, which inflicts pain so tremendous that he howls with horror, and writhing his agonized frame, occasions earthquakes." Eyra was the physician of the gods. Var, the "wary," or the "true," was the goddess of oaths. She presided over the promises of lovers; was attentive to all concealed engagements of that kind, and punished those who kept not their plighted troth. [*North. Ant.* 2, 97.] Vidar, the "antagonist," the mighty son of Odin, is destined to avenge the engorgement of his living sire upon the wolf Fenris when there shall be, "war in Heaven." Iduna, the "sedulous," was the goddess of immortality, and spouse of Bragé. Gerda, the "guarded," the personification of modesty, was daughter of the giant Gymir, and spouse of Frey. Nanna, the daughter of Nefnaso, was spouse of Balder. Hela, "death," the offspring of the evil principle (Loké), was precipitated into the nebulous region, Nifleim, where the sovereignty over nine worlds was entrusted to her, that she might allot abodes to such as should be dispatched to her realm, namely, all who died through age or sickness. The ample precincts of her dwelling are surrounded by an insurmountable rampart, with grated portals. Her hall is hell-shades; hunger her table; her knife, famine; sloth her valet; indolence her maid; precipice her threshold; her bed, pain and sickness; fiery imprecation, her canopy. Half blue and half flesh-coloured, she is distinguishable enough, and her look is wild and terrific. [*Edda.*] Gefione was the personification of virgin purity; Astrild, the Cupid of the North. Ægir represented the sea; and Rana, the "spoiler," was his spouse or daughter. The *Nornir*, or Fates, were three sisters, Urda, Verdandi, and Skulda. As with the Greeks and Romans, Fate governed even the gods, and Jupiter himself stood in subjection to an all-disposing destiny, so

must the deities of the North bow to the supreme *Nornir*, to the blooming virgins, who, excelling in wisdom as in beauty, foresee and predetermine all events. Heimdallur is thus described in the prose *edda* :—"There is another very sacred and powerful deity, who is called Heimdall. He dwells at the end of the bridge Bifrost, or the 'Rainbow,' in a castle called the Celestial Fort. He is the sentinel or watchman of the gods. The post assigned him is to abide at the entry into heaven, to prevent the giants from forcing their way over the bridge. He sleeps less than a bird; and sees by night, as well as by day, more than a hundred leagues around him. So acute is his ear, that he hears the grass growing on the earth, and the wool on the sheep's back; nor doth the smallest sound escape him. Besides all this, he hath a trumpet, which is heard through all the worlds." [*North. Ant.* 2, 82.] Nidhöggur, the old serpent, is actively engaged in the place of future torments. There were various other minor divinities in the Scandinavian mythology, though their number was far inferior to that recorded in the superstitious belief of the Greeks. "The deficiency," remarks an intelligent writer in 'Chambers' Edinburgh Journal,' "was made up among the Northerns by the assignment of more multitudinous duties to the greater deities. Thus Odin, from the extent of his government, received as many as one hundred and twenty distinct names, each indicating some individual quality ascribed to him." There was also, as in the Greek roll of supernatural personages, an inferior order of beings, of which the more prominent were deformed dwarfs, called Dwärgs, and hideous giants and giantesses, termed, Trolds or Trolls. The former invisibly interfered with the affairs of the human race, and their acts were as malicious as their own existence was hateful and unhappy. They inhabited caves or rocks in the earth :—

"The dwarfs groan
Before their stone doors.
They know the paths of the rocks."

They were the Cyclops in miniature, the miners of the North

"These pigmies," observes Mr. Strong, "though hideous in form and malevolent in disposition, are admitted to have excelled the very Æsir in mechanical skill and metallurgy. A superiority scarcely to be disputed, since we find them not only forging hair of gold to replace the locks which mischievous Loké had cut from the bright-ringletted wife of Thor; but fabricating a golden-bristled boar from a skin committed to the forge: a ring (Draupnir) from which others periodically distilled; and a ship—Skidbladnir, the 'gliding *laminæ*,'—which supplied its own breezes, and was so conveniently elastic, that, although capable of containing all the Æsir with their arms, it might be folded together and put into the pocket." Mr. Henderson, in his work on Iceland, p. 192, informs us, that the natives of that country still term Dvergas-midi any workmanship which they wish to describe as particularly artificial.—Another class of these strangely fantastic creations of olden superstition was the Elves, in which term we have a familiar *memento* of those ideal beings that sported in the fabulous relations of our own island. Like the Oreads, Naiads, and Dryads, of the Greek and Roman fictions, they had their habitations in the mountains, waters, and woods, and received their designations respectively as dun-elfin, field-elfin, &c. They occupied a prominent place in the popular faith, and were variously regarded according to the supposed attributes peculiar to each,—some of these grotesque personages being of a festive and frolic-loving temperament, and inclined to befriend mortals; and others of an artful and malicious, or fierce and cruel disposition. The Elves of Light seem to have been the principal, and not the most amiable of these wayward and eccentric sprites. "They possess," says the reverend translator of "Frithiof's Saga," "the festive and saltatory propensities of their namesakes, but want their amiability of disposition. Woe to the wanderer who approaches at nightfall the pillared scene of their revels! There is a witchery in the music, and a fascination in the hour, persuasive as it is perilous; syren strains with the cup of Circe. Yet might a refusal of the never-failing invitation to participate in their festivities prove as fatal as a compliance with it." Mr. Keightley, in his "Fairy Mythology," p. 145, gives us the inter-

esting story of Sir Olaf, whose fate is foreshadowed in the following ominous invitation :—

"Wilt thou not tread the dance with me?
Breaketh day, falloth rime :
An evil shall I fix on thee,"
&c., &c.

The Elves appear to have been of the same *genus* as the Peri of the Persians, and, like many of the Scandinavian fictions, were doubtless derived from an Eastern source. "In the system of the Northmen's religion," observes Mr. Turner, "we see the great principles of the ancient theism, mingled with the additions of allegory, polytheism, and idolatry." And again he remarks—"These traditions correspond with the idea mentioned in the beginning of this work, that the barbaric nations of Europe have sprung from the branches of more civilized states." To this great historian, whose name must ever remain among the most illustrious recorded in the annals of English literature, I had lately the honour to communicate, for his consideration and advice, a conjecture which I had been led to form on the mysterious subject of the Saxon idol, Irminsula, whose worship has been least understood of all the religious rites of that people. As volumes have been written in the attempt to solve the doubts besetting this obscure enquiry, I shall not be considered to trespass unduly on the attention of the antiquarian reader, if I introduce, as a not inappropriate addition to the present note, a copy of my recent letter, and of Mr. Sharon Turner's very courteous and obliging reply. Let me premise, that, should a feeling of vanity be imputed to me, in thus alluding to a communication which conveys a flattering compliment to myself, from one who is already regarded with unanimous veneration by the most eminent of his contemporaries, I shall willingly submit to the impeachment, being, in truth, far more proud of a word of encouragement and approbation from this prince of British historians, whose fame shall last as long as history itself shall live, than I could feel, were the united laudations of all the other magnates of modern literature lavished upon me. "This I thought fit to recite," as Fuller

says in a similar instance, "not for his honour but to honour myself, as conceiving it my credit to be graced with so learned a man's acquaintance!" Perhaps, few who possess an intimate knowledge of the works of this truly illustrious and most amiable man, will object to the fervour of any expression into which the ardent lover of historic research may be betrayed, when he seeks to acknowledge the innumerable claims to gratitude which crowd upon his mind at the mention of a name so long associated with the proudest successes of antiquarian discovery.

The following notice of the Irminsula is extracted from Mr. Turner's "History of the Anglo-Saxons," vol. i. appendix to book ii. pp. 219-223,—"But the Saxon idol, whose celebrity on the continent was the most eminent, was the Irminsula. [The most complete account of this idol is in the "Irminsula Saxonica," by Henry Meibomius. It is in the third volume of his "Rerum German. Hist.," published by the two Meibomii.] The name of this venerated idol has been spelt with varying orthography. The "Saxon Chronicle," published at Mentz in 1492, calls it Armensula, which accords with the pronunciation of modern Saxony. The appellation adhered to by Meibomius, the most elaborate investigator of this curious object of Saxon idolatry, is Irminsula. [Meibom., p. 6. "It has been called, Irminsulus, Irminsul, Irmindsul, Erminsul, Hermansaul, Hormensul, Hermesuel, Hermensul, and Adurmensul, *ibid.*] It stood at Eresberg, on the Dimele. [*Ibid.*, c. ii. p. 6.] This place the Saxon Chronicle above mentioned calls Marsburg. The "Rhyming Chronicle" of the thirteenth century writes it Mersburg, which is the modern name. [*Ibid.*, p. 7.] Its temple was spacious, elaborate, and magnificent. The image was raised upon a marble column. [*Ibid.*, c. iii. p. 8.] The predominant figure was an armed warrior. Its right hand held a banner, in which a red rose was conspicuous; its left presented a balance. The crest of its helmet was a cock; on its breast was engraven a bear, and the shield depending from its shoulders exhibited a lion in a field full of flowers. [*Ibid.*, p. 9. The particular descriptions of this idol are all taken from the Saxon Chronicle printed at Mentz.] The expressions of Adam of Bremen seem to intimate that it was

of wood, and that the place where it stood had no roof. It was the largest idol of all Saxony, and, according to Rolwinck, a writer of the fifteenth century, whose authorities are not known to us, though the warlike image was the principal figure, three others were about it. [MEIBOM., c. iii. p. 9.] From the Chronicle called the "Vernacular Chronicle," we learn that the other Saxon temples had pictures of the Irminsula. [*Ibid.*] Priests of both sexes attended the temple. The women applied themselves to divination and fortune-telling; the men sacrificed, and often intermeddled with political affairs, as their sanction was thought to ensure success. The priests of the Irminsula at Eresberg appointed the gow graven, the governors of the districts of continental Saxony. They also named the judges, who annually decided the provincial disputes. There were sixteen of these judges: the eldest, and therefore the chief, was called Gravius; the youngest, Frono, or attendant; the rest were Freyerichter, or free judges. They had jurisdiction over seventy-two families. Twice a year, in April and October, the Gravius and the Frono went to Eresberg, and there made a placatory offering of two wax lights and nine pieces of money. If any of the judges died in the year, the event was notified to the priests, who out of the seventy-two families chose a substitute. In the open air, before the door of the person appointed, his election was seven times announced to the people in a loud voice, and this was his inauguration. In the hour of battle, the priests took their favourite image from its column, and carried it to the field. After the conflict, captives, and the cowardly of their own army, were immolated to the idol. [MEIBOM., c. iii. p. 10. Tacitus mentions generally of the Germans, that they detached their idols and banners from their sacred groves, and carried them to the field of battle. Germ., s. 7.] Meibomius states two stanzas of an ancient song, in which the son of a Saxon king, who had lost a battle, complains that he was delivered to the priest to be sacrificed. [The verses are:—

> "Sol ich nun in Gottes fronen hende
> In meinen aller besten tagen
> Geben werden, und sterben so elende
> Das musz ich wol hochlich klagen.

Wen mir das glucke fuget hette
Des streites einen guten ende,
Dorffte ich nicht leisten diese wette
Netzen mit blut die hire wende."
—MEIBOM., p. 10.]

He adds, that, according to some writers, the ancient Saxons, and chiefly their military, on certain solemn days, clothed in armour, and brandishing iron cestus, rode round the idol, and, sometimes dismounting to kneel before it, bowed down and murmured out their prayers for help and victory.—[MEIBOM., p. 11.]

To whom this great image was erected, is a question full of uncertainty. Because Ἑρμῆς approached the sound of Irminsul, and Ἄρης that of Eresberg, it has been referred to Mars and Mercury.—[Ibid., chap. 5, p. 11.]

Some considered it a memorial of the celebrated Arminius; [the names to this supposition are very respectable;] and one has laboured to prove that it was an hieroglyphical effigy, intended for no deity in particular. [Joannes Goropius Beccanius is the person whose reveries are given at length in Meibomius, 13-17. We may suggest, as a new opinion, that Hermansul literally expresses either, "The Pillar of the Lord the Moon, or the Lord Man," whom the Germans, according to Tacitus, revered. As the moon was a male deity, Mannus and the moon may have been the same person. From the inscription mentioned below, it was clearly their war-god. The similarity between Irmin and Ἑρμῆς may have led Tacitus to mention that the Germans chiefly worshipped Mercury, s. 9.] In 772, this venerated object of Saxon superstition was thrown down and broken, and its fame destroyed by Charlemagne. For three days the work of demolition was carried on by one part of the army, while the other remained under arms. Its immense wealth and precious vessels were distributed to the conquerors, or devoted to pious uses. [MEIBOM., p. 18. The image is said to have been long preserved in the monastery at Corbey. It then bore this inscription:—"Formerly I was the leader and God of the Saxons. The people of war adored me. The nation who worshipped me governed the field of battle."—

Ibid.] The fate of the column of the image, after its eversion, may be noticed. [It was about eleven feet long, and the circumference of the base was about twelve cubits. The base was of rude stone, or of gravel-stone. The column was marble, of a light red colour. Its belts were of orichalchus; the upper and lower gilt, and also the one between these and the crown, which is also gilt, as is the upper circle incumbent on it, which has three heroic verses. The whole work was surrounded with iron rails, dentated, to preserve it from injury.—MEIBOM., p. 31. He has given a plate of it.] It was thrown into a waggon, and buried on the Weser, in a place where Corbey afterwards stood. It was found again in the reign after Charlemagne, and was transported beyond the Weser. The Saxons attempting to rescue it, a battle ensued on the spot, which was afterwards called Armensula, from the incident. The Saxons were repulsed, and, to prevent further chances, the column was hastily thrown into the Inner. A church being afterwards built in the vicinity, at Hillesheim, it was conveyed into it after much religious lustration, and placed in the choir, where it long served to hold their lights at their festivals. —[MEIBOM., p. 19, and p. 31.] For many ages it remained neglected and forgotten, till at length, Meibomius saw it, and a canon of the church, friendly to his studies, had its rust and discoloration taken off. [Ibid., p. 19. Our ancient Irmin-street has been lately conjectured to have been derived from the name of this idol. If so, the inference would be reasonable that it was worshipped also in England."]

THE IRMINSULA.

LETTER ON THE SUBJECT OF THIS IDOL, ADDRESSED TO SHARON TURNER, ESQ., F.A.S., BY THE AUTHOR OF THE PRESENT WORK.

"SIR,—May I, without being considered to take an undue liberty, trouble you with the perusal of a few lines, suggested by reading, in your admirable "History of the Anglo-Saxons," the various conjectures which have been formed respecting the nature of the Saxon idol, Irminsula. Having been for some time engaged in preparing for the press a work, illustrative of the Northern antiquities, I have had occasion to pay some attention

to the mythic records of the Danes and Saxons; and, amongst other matters of investigation, fell upon an enquiry into the character of this celebrated idol. I read, with much interest, all you have advanced on the subject; both as the opinions of others and of yourself; and, having found reason to adopt a conjecture differing as far from yours as the Sun from the Moon (I am speaking literally as well as figuratively), I hope you will kindly excuse me for communicating the grounds on which we differ. As an old friend of Dr. Bosworth, through whose obliging medium (being ignorant of your address) I send this letter, I feel additionally assured that you will pardon my intrusion.

"In looking over a very interesting little work, 'A New History of Great Britain,' &c., &c., by the Rev. John Adams, A.M., Fourth Edition, 1812, I found the following passage relating to this idol:—'A great log of unfashioned wood, perpendicularly raised in the open air, was the common representative of Odin. This symbol they distinguished by the name of Irmunsel, a word which, in their language, signified the universal pillar which sustains the world.' We find it recorded, in various accounts of the religious ceremonies of the Saxons, that they solemnized a festival in honour of the Sun, on the day in December in which the days began to lengthen; and that a log of wood was burnt on the occasion, as an emblem of returning light and heat. I need not add, that to this ancient practice may be traced the *yule*-log at Christmas, which is still continued among the observances of the olden time in various parts of England. We observe, in the representation of the idol of the Sun, the bust of a man set upon a pillar; holding, with out-stretched arms, a burning wheel upon his breast. From these facts it appears that the Sun was an emblem of Odin; and that the log of wood and the pillar were the same visual representation of his all-sustaining power, in the regulation of the universe:—

'Qui regit immensam justo moderamine molem;'

as was said of the Roman Jupiter. He who set the luminaries of the sky in their places would not be inaptly typified under the

semblance of this the main object of the inanimate creation. I have not found it expressly recorded in any antiquarian work, that the sun was the emblem of Odin; although, in a note to one of Chatterton's poems, it is so stated.

"I next refer to the idol of Odin, which represents him in a bold and martial attitude clad in armour, with a broad sword, uplifted, in his right hand. Now we have seen that the block of wood and the pillar were emblems implying the same figurative representation; and that Odin and the sun formed one object of worship, the latter being only typical of the former. There can then be no doubt, I apprehend, that the armed warrior alluded to, as being raised upon a marble column or pillar, was designed to be the representative of Odin. We have already observed that the sun, the emblem of Odin, was so represented—namely, set upon a pillar, and that Odin was worshipped under the form of an armed-warrior.

"I am confirmed in my conjecture by every circumstance described in the Saxon Chronicle printed at Mentz, from which your valuable work gives a copious extract. To take them *seriatim*:—it is in the first place stated, that the right hand of the image held a banner, in which a red rose was conspicuous; its left held a balance. The device of a rose very naturally associates itself with the Eastern origin of Odin. In the Eastern part of the world the rose was particularly fine; it was the theme of the poet, both in sacred and profane composition, and the generally received image of beauty; and, moreover, it was twined in chaplets to adorn the brows of the warrior in his triumph. Such may have been the standard borne by the real or earthly personage, who, under the name of Odin, migrated from the East, and subjected Scandinavia to his sway. The balance readily presents itself as the ordinary symbol of justice; and is also peculiarly referable to one who displayed in so wide a field the functions of a legislator. In the Eastern writings, and particularly in the Scriptures, the balance is often alluded to, both figuratively and literally. The Druids of Gaul and Britain represented their goddess of Justice with a balance in her right hand. In the second place, the effigy in question was the largest idol in all

Saxony. Surely this single fact should be conclusive, that to the supreme deity of their worship would this excess of veneration be paid. In the fact that the priests of the Irminsula appointed the governors and judges of continental Saxony, may, I think, be equally recognized the natural respect accruing to the founder of their religious and political establishments.

"In the hour of battle the priests took their favourite image from its column. The column, without the effigy of Odin, would still represent the god, in like manner as the log of wood, or, as it was called, the 'pillar which sustains the world;' and the circumstance that it was thus removable curiously illustrates the idea that the effigy was that of Odin, since without it the remaining pillar would have no signification whatever. They carried it to the field. After the conflict, captives, and the cowardly of their own army, were immolated to the idol. This is so peculiarly characteristic of the rites which would prevail, in order to celebrate a god whose chief titles—the 'Father of the Slain,' the 'Severe God,' the 'Furious One,' the 'Avenger,' were derived from the very practice of slaughter, and so confirmatory of the statement of Tacitus, that they offered human victims to their chief deity, that I am fully impressed with a belief that the idol was connected with the worship of Odin; of Odin who, as you observe, a few pages before, was the predominant idol of the Saxon adoration. Again, let us look at the inscription said to have been put on the image at a subsequent period. 'Formerly, I was the leader and god of the Saxons. The people of war adored me. The nation who worshipped me governed the field of battle.' Who was the leader and god of the Saxons (*par excellence*) but Odin, or Woden? So sang honest old Cartwright:

'By Woden, Godde of Saxonnes,
From whence comes Wensdaie—that is, Woden's daie,
Truthe is a thynge which ever I will keepe
Unto thylke daie in which I creepe intoe
Mie sepulchere.'

"On looking back to the description of the image, I perceive that I have omitted to allude to a part of it. The crest of its

helmet was a cock, a device emblematical of vigilance, one of the great attributes of Odin, and reminding us of the passage in the 'Völuspá,' which has been thus translated:—

> 'Crow'd his Æsir call,
> Cock with glistening crest;
> He in Odin's hall
> Wakes the brave from rest.'

"It suggests also to our recollection the similarly devised emblem of his two ravens, Hugin and Munin, 'Thought' and 'Memory,' that sat generally at his ear, and communicated to him intelligence of all things that were going on in the universe. On the breast of the image was engraven a boar, the symbol of that fierce courage which his followers were exhorted to exercise, in order to entitle themselves to a seat in Valhall—the 'hall of slaughter.' The bear is the most ferocious beast in the north, as the lion is in the South.—See Dr. Bosworth's A. S. Dict., *sub voc.*—BEORN. The shield depending from his shoulder exhibited a lion in a field full of flowers. We have just observed that a lion is the emblem of savage valour; we may now take notice that in the Eastern writings the figure of a lion is used as the symbol of command and royalty; and that the ancient money of the Gauls and Germans was in part stamped with the device of a lion, in allusion to the supposed emblem of Gomer, the great ancestor of those nations; and this device may allude to the god, as seated on his throne, Lidskialfa, or the 'Terror of Nations,' in his chief hall in Asgard, which, as the 'Mansion of Joy,' may be likened to a field full of flowers; or the lion may be referable to the early arms of Saxony, which, according to the ancient Wittichind, contained a lion, and the flowers be rendered as the type of national happiness and prosperity. Whatever may be said of the signification of the bearing represented in the shield, it must be confessed that the bird that proclaims the rising sun presents a most suitable device for the crest of the solar deity.* The last terrible day, when

* The Eastern nations which worshipped the Sun sacrificed cocks to their deity; "creatures," says Favine, in his "Theatre of Honour and Knighthood,"

Odin himself shall be destroyed, is to be ushered in by the crow of this the watch-bird of Asgard. I lay no stress, however, on matters like these, capable of so widely-varied an interpretation; but I do think there is weight in the evidence afforded by the previously-enumerated particulars, that the festival of the Sun, and the chief rites of Irminsula were identical; and that Odin himself was the object of this worship. The Eastern origin of this supposed god may have given rise to his being represented under the symbol of the Sun.

"When the effigy was carried with the army, the pillar would, doubtless, receive the same worship as the more common representative of the god—the log of wood—Irmunsel, the 'pillar of the world.' And it is a singular fact that, before I consulted your work, I had written the following remark on Mr. Adams's notice of this idol. 'It is probable that, when this idol was made the subject of more formal worship, as in the chief solemnities of their principal temples, a lofty and richly-decorated pillar, rather than so rude an emblem as the great log of unfashioned wood, became the form of the symbol worshipped under this name.' How strikingly my conjecture appears to be verified may be seen in Meibomius's account of the column, or pillar, of the Irminsula, where a reference is made to its marble fabric and gilded belts of orichalchus, its heroic verses and crowning adornment of an effigy of the god in whose honour it was erected. I conceive that the name of Irmundsul was compounded of *yr*, angry, *mund*, a man (a man of power and strength, a protector),

which Psellus and the naturalists affirme to be sunnie, swifte, and very prompt of flight and course, and so, consequently, acceptable offerings to the Sunne, the fountaine of light; admirable for his three qualities; his luminous beautie; his force and efficacie of heate; and his promptitude and swiftnesse of course." The cock is mentioned by Solomon, in his "Book of Proverbs," as serving for the symbol of strength and power. "The cocke, mounted on his spurres," says Favine, "chanteth victoriously, by preference above all the creatures of the earth; so say the philosophers and naturalists, God having given him such light and power: as we learn from the wise King of Edom, and mirrour of patience, the Patriarch Job. 'Quis dedit Gallo intelligentiam?'" Pythagoras speaks of the cock as "sacred to the Sun and Moon." The story of Gallus, as connected with the detected amour of Mars and Venus, will be familiar to the classical reader.

and *sul*, a pillar. This interpretation of the word, implying the pillar of the 'furious one,' is confirmed, in a remarkable manner, by the particulars already stated. That the Sun was a reputed emblem of Odin may be gathered from a passage in the paper of a contemporary writer in one of the periodicals, where Thor is described as 'the son of Odin and Hertha,' or, in other words, 'of the Sun and the Earth.'

"The pontiffs of Odin were also the judges of the law, as appears from the following passage in the 'Ynglinga-saga :'—'The country to the east of Tanasquisl, in Asia, was called Asaland, or Asaheimr, and the capital of that country, As-gard. There ruled Odin, and there too was a great place of sacrifice. Twelve pontiffs (hofgodar) presided in the temples, who were at the same time the judges of the law. They were called Diar, or Drottnar, and all the people were bound to shew them reverence and obedience.' Does not this shew the origin of the power which the priests of Irminsula possessed, in appointing the governors and judges of Saxony? In the same saga it is stated, that Odin 'often appeared to the Sviar, as they thought, especially before great battles. To some he promised victory, others he invited to his hall.' Does not this point out most clearly the origin of the practice which the priests of Irminsula had, of carrying the image of the armed warrior to the field, in the hour of battle?

"I shall be proud to receive some intimation that you excuse the freedom of this intrusion, which I have been tempted to commit, under the strong desire of eliciting truth on a subject to me abounding with interest. With grateful assurances of the extreme pleasure and advantage which I have derived from your elegant and erudite works, and with most respectful wishes for your long-continued health and happiness, I beg to remain, Sir,

"Your very faithful, humble servant,

"ROBERT BIGSBY."

"Sharon Turner, Esq., &c."

LETTER FROM MR. SHARON TURNER, IN REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

"SIR,—I am much obliged to you for your letter, which Dr. Bosworth left for me at my son's, in Red Lion Square, when he

called there. I was myself too unwell to see him, when I was obliged to go to London on business for a day; and since that time I have been so disabled, by a return of one of my debilitating attacks, that I have been unable to read your favour until yesterday.

"This must excuse my not having noticed it before, and I am still too unwell to do more than to acknowledge the receipt of it, and, at my age of seventy-six, am not likely to be more effective, though I hope, with care, to regain some of my usual comfort, by my system of quiet, great abstinence, and much self-management.

"It is now many years since I have withdrawn my attention from the Anglo-Saxon antiquities, and could not, therefore, now re-examine any disputed point about them. With respect to the Irminsul and your new conjecture or adopted one concerning it, I will only say that it may be as probable or as just as any other. But the information we have about it is too scanty, and the period in which it was in popular use is too remote, and all the circumstances attending it are too much involved in doubt, for any certainty to be now attained as to the person represented by the image upon it.

"Your reasoning is ingenious, and I do not wish either to dispute or discourage it, but I am glad that the subject has drawn the attention of a gentleman like yourself.

"I am not able to write more upon the matter you so ably discuss, but, having felt myself the pleasure which all such investigations give to the student who pursues them, I am sure you will derive much recreation from them. This is their greatest reward, for all decisive proof or certainty must be out of the question. I beg to remain, sir,

"Your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

"SHARON TURNER."

"Dr. Robert Bigsby, &c."

(56.) Although the music here described is represented as of magical or unearthly character, yet that it, in some respects, strictly accords with that in use at the period to which my narrative refers, will be clearly shewn, for the satisfaction of the

antiquarian reader. The drum, cymbals, and harp are mentioned by Beda, as instruments belonging to the Anglo-Saxons. The trumpet, and the flute, and a kind of lyre of four strings, struck by a *plectrum*, are also to be seen in the drawings of this early period. Aldhelm, in his poem, "De Laude Virginum," describes the organ, as does his contemporary and survivor, Bede. Under this note may be introduced a curious passage relating to the minstrel art, which shews the extraordinary influence ascribed to music at a period when the rude passions of each predatory chief spurned at the restraint of law or devotion; while lust, rapine, and violence were unchecked by appeals to the softer sympathies of the dark, reckless, and unrelenting oppressor. "I know a song," says one of the Northern bards, "by which I soften and enchant the arms of my enemies, and render their weapons of none effect. I know a song which I need only to sing when men have loaded me with bonds, for the moment I sing it my chains fall in pieces, and I walk forth at liberty. I know a song useful to all mankind; for as soon as hatred inflames the sons of men, the moment I sing it they are appeased. I know a song of such virtue, that were I caught in a storm, I can hush the winds, and render the air perfectly calm." The following anecdote is recorded in Danish history, and instances the opposite effects which were sometimes attendant on the exercise of the minstrel's faculty:—

"Erik Eiegod, King of Denmark, was seated at the festive board, when a musician was announced who professed to wield at pleasure the emotions of the human heart. He was summoned into the royal presence, to prove his dexterity; but long excused himself, alleging that the mind of the monarch would be disordered. This premonition serving merely to aggravate curiosity, he was then commanded to play, with a menace of the consequences of disobedience. The musician now finding remonstrance fruitless, requested the attendants to conceal, first, all the weapons and arms in the saloon. This injunction having been executed, and the door locked, he commenced his minstrelsy. The first piece which he played had the effect of rendering the whole court melancholy and depressed. The second piece excited them all to merriment, so that they sprang from their seats and danced: but with

the third, they were wrought up to frenzy. In this fit of madness, the king forced open a cabinet, seized a sword, and slew four of his ministers; and it was found necessary to rush upon and coerce him until the paroxysm subsided. The pious Erik, on recovering his self-possession, deeply afflicted at the catastrophe, not contented with the penance enjoined by Canute the Great, vowed to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and pray for the souls of his four victims at the Holy Sepulchre. From this determination, neither tears nor prayers could divert him, and he died at Cyprus, on his way thither."—HOLBERG's *Danm. Rig. Hist.*, as quoted by Mr. Strong, in the Notes to his Translation of "Frithiof's Saga."

(57.) The *Silentiary* was an officer, whose duty it was to command silence in the hall, when the king sat down to table. He then took his stand near one of the pillars, and when any improper noise arose, he immediately quashed it by striking the pillar with his rod.

(58.) In the idols of this god, he is represented with a powerful hammer, called the "crusher," (*miolnir*), with which he annihilates all who oppose him, and who offend the gods. On his right hand he wears an iron gauntlet, with which he grasps and wields the formidable crusher. The hammer, or mallet, of Thor, possesses the wonderful power of never missing its aim, and when launched at any object, returns to his hand, after having destroyed his foe. This extraordinary instrument was forged by Sindri, the Vulcan of the Scandinavians.

(59.) A magician and demon, whose name, as Mr. Sharon Turner remarks, was doubtless the origin of *hocus-pocus*.

(60.) An old term for a merry andrew, and also for one whose wounds have been dressed with salt, by way of punishment.

(61.) 2 LANGEBEK, Script. Rer. Dan., 279. SUHM, Historie of Danmark, tom. ii. pp. 263-266. It was also termed the "blood-owl," and is thus described by Professor Rask:—"Signum noctuæ

incisum tergo hostis superati, et ita post dissectas utrinque costas omnes a tergo, pulmones per hanc aperturam extrahebantur, cruento et barbaro olim Normannorum et Francorum more."

(62.) I know that it may be objected to my narrative of Sir Ernest's dream, that it possesses too much circumstantiality of incident, and presents also too close a congruity of the reasoning powers with the varied impressions which arise, to render it a natural representation of a state of somnolency; while by many it will be thought that the supposed period of time to which it refers must be considered as greatly exceeding the ordinary, if not the universal duration of such *capriccios* of the roving fancy, under the temporary suspension of our general consciousness. All I can say is, that such who may entertain the objections alluded to, are not of the number of those who spend much of their leisure, when awake, in evoking poetic and romantic images from the depths of solitary meditation; or in indulging long visionary speculations, in connection with the imperfectly-recorded, dubious, and therefore curiosity-exciting events and incidents of the early historic page. It cannot be doubted that those who most vigorously exercise their imaginations in the ordinary course of their daily pursuits, will be most subject to powerful impressions of the fancy in the hours devoted to sleep; the natural result of a propensity to any particular exercise of the mind or body being to develop more strongly and permanently the organs through which we exert that communication. Thus, the poet and the antiquary, whose customary objects of intellectual research abound with an infinite variety of speculative incidents addressed to the higher powers of the imagination, are more liable than others, whose lives are devoted to the common-place theories of the "broad daylight world," to entertain, in the hours of slumber, that peculiar kind of mental excitability which produces the phenomenon of dreaming. And, as respects the multiplicity of incident supposed to be involved, in the instance adverted to, I will avail myself of a passage in a little work which I have just met with, by means of which I hope to acquit myself of any alleged exaggeration in this particular:—"The imagination [in dreams] revels unchecked by

actual circumstances, and is not under the control of the will. As thought is very rapid, it thus happens that events which would take whole days or a longer time in performance, are dreamed in a few moments. So wonderful is this compression of a multitude of transactions into the very shortest period, that when we are accidentally awakened from a profound slumber by a loud knock at, or by the rapid opening of, the door, a train of actions which it would take hours, or days, or even weeks, to accomplish, sometimes, passes through the mind. Time, in fact, seems to be in a great measure annihilated. An extensive period is reduced, as it were, to a single point, or rather a single point is made to embrace an extensive period. In one instant we pass through many adventures, see many strange sights, and hear many strange sounds. If we are awakened by a loud knock, we have perhaps the idea of a tumult passing before us, and know all the characters engaged in it—their aspects, and even their very names. If the door open violently, the flood-gates of a canal may appear to be expanding, and we may see the individuals employed in the process, and hear their conversation, which may seem an hour in length; if a light be brought into the room, the notion of the house being in flames invades us, and we are witnesses to the whole conflagration from its commencement till it be finally extinguished. The thoughts which arise in such situations are endless, and assume an infinite variety of aspects." * The interval associated with the chain of incidents and ideas recorded in Sir Ernest's dream, needs no aid from the argument here cited; the period of time engaged in sleep being represented as precisely of the same duration as the events themselves would have required for their fulfilment; but I have cited the passage as illustrating the text in the particular instance of the extent and variety of our emotions, and the circumstantiality of our ideas, in a state of somnolency.

(63.) There is a curious tradition relating to one of the priors of Repton, who had acquired an extraordinary reputation for

* Macnish's "Philosophy of Sleep," quoted in Chambers's "Miscellany of Useful and Entertaining Tracts."

sanctity, but who unfortunately fell a victim to the wiles of the arch-enemy, under the guise of a beautiful female. Being prevailed upon, under some pretext or other, to accompany his fair midnight visitor in a boat on the river, a sudden tempest arose; the waves became flames of fire; and the fiend, assuming the swarthy lineaments of his infernal nature, seized the terrified monk, and sank with him to the regions of eternal perdition. This romantic incident forms the subject of a lengthened episode in my poem of "Repton; or, Hours of Rural Solitude," prefixed to the general edition of my poetical works, as published by Messrs. Whittaker, in 1842. The edifice forming the supposed scene of the story was long ago destroyed, with the exception of a curious brick tower, with battlements, and an ornamental cornice. This is one of the earliest specimens built with such kind of materials now remaining, and is of the date of Henry VI., as the rebus and initial letters of Overton (one of the priors in that reign) sufficiently point out.

(64.) Prayers for the dead, as well as for the living, were an ancient practice in the primitive church; as the following interesting passage from "A Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England" will testify:—"In the primitive church, too, their prayers were more extensive, and took in the dead as well as the living: not that they had any notion of the Romish purgatory, or so much as imagined that those whom they prayed for were racked or tormented with any temporary pain. There were some of the ancients, it is true, who believed (and it seems to have been the current opinion from Origen downwards), that the trial we shall undergo at the last great day will be a state of purgation; which they imagined to consist of a probational fire, through which all must pass (even the Prophets and Apostles, and the Virgin Mary herself not excepted), and which shall differently affect us, as we shall be differently prepared: and, upon this, perhaps some of them might found the prayers they used for the departed saints. Others again believed that Christ should reign a thousand years upon earth, before the final day of judgment; and also supposed that

the saints should rise to enjoy and partake of this happy state, before the general Resurrection of the Dead: and therefore they prayed for the souls of the deceased, that they might not only rest in peace for the present, but also obtain part in the first Resurrection. However, they all agreed in this, that the interval between death and the end of the world, is a state of expectation and imperfect bliss, in which the souls of the righteous wait for the completion and perfection of their happiness at the consummation of all things: and therefore, whilst they were praying for the Catholic Church, they thought it not improper to add a petition in behalf of that larger and better part of it which had gone before them, that they might all together obtain a blessed and glorious resurrection, and be brought at last to a perfect fruition of happiness in heaven. By this means they testified their love and respect to the dead, declared their belief in the Communion of Saints, and kept up in themselves a lively sense of the soul's immortality. And, with this intent, a petition for the deceased was continued by our Reformers, in this very prayer of which we are now discoursing [The Prayer for the whole State of Christ's Church], in the first Common Prayer Book of King Edward VI. But this, with a larger thanksgiving for the examples of the Saints than what we now use, was left out of the second book, upon the exceptions of Bucer and Calvin, and the words [militant here on earth] were added to the exhortation, 'Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church,' in order to limit the prayer to the living only. The substance of the thanksgiving, indeed, was added again afterwards, first to the Scotch liturgy, and then to our own at the last review; though that in the Scotch liturgy keeps closest to the words in the first book of King Edward. And though the direct petition for the *faithful departed* is still discontinued, yet, were it not for the restriction of the words, *militant here on earth*, they might be supposed to be implied in our present form, when we beg of God that *we*, WITH THEM, *may be partakers of his heavenly kingdom*."

POSTSCRIPT.

The farewell words of "gentle" *Puck*, in the "Midsummer Night's Dream," forcibly address themselves to my recollection at the moment of laying down my pen, on the completion of this "weak and idle theme." They may serve to express what I would wish to say to the reader on parting:—

"If we shadows have offended,
Think but this (and all is ended),
That you have but slumber'd here,
While these VISIONS did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a *dream*,
Gentles, do not reprehend,
If you pardon, we will mend."

I may add, by way of corollary, that if, happily, 'we shadows' have *not* "offended," I shall feel a hearty solace in the reflection that the foregoing pages may have added one enduring leaf to the chaplet which adorns the brow of "reverend antiquitie;" or may, at least, have subserved the humbler, yet still cherished purpose, of conveying some small increase of interest to the "local habitation" of my "airy nothing," to a spot hallowed in popular opinion by its venerable traditions and historical associations.

APPENDIX.

THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS ON TIMES PAST AND TIMES PRESENT.

IN

Eight Supplementary Chapters,

SUGGESTED BY THE TOO COMMON SAYING—

'THINGS ARE NOT AS THEY WERE!"

"Retinens vestigia famæ."

"Rememberynge ye daies of olde."

"Laudator temporis acti."

"'God be wid them times,' said Paul, 'they warn't like now.'"

Popular Tales and Legends of the Irish Peasantry.

CHAPTER I.

RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY DAYS.—THE IDEALIZING PERCEPTIONS AND ROMANTIC ASPIRATIONS OF YOUTH.—THOUGHTS ON THE CHARACTERS OF MANKIND.—THE WORLD A MASQUERADE.—FEW HEARTS AND MANY FACES.—LOVE OF SOLITUDE AND POETICAL MUSINGS.—STIRRING IMAGERY OF THE CHIVALRIC ERA.—HABITS OF LITERARY OCCUPATION.—A WORD OR TWO ON THE WRITER'S PUBLICATIONS, AS SUGGESTIVE OF OLD ENGLISH FEELINGS.

PRO. For I
Have given you a thread of mine own life,
Or that for which I live.

Tempest, Act iv. sc. 1.

I SHALL now proceed, with the reader's indulgence, to say something of the train of circumstances which have tended to inspire that love of literary solitude, to which the public are indebted for the present and preceding lucubrations of my perhaps feeble, but certainly pains-taking and ingenuous pen.

I began life with a better opinion of my fellow-men than most people usually form. I desired to look on the sunny side, and to take every thing "by the best handle."

To use a coarse but expressive old phrase, I was

not one of those who would "look for a knot in a bullrush." Did I see a man more seemingly pious than his neighbours, I "gave God glory therefore," as Cromwell did for his successes; and wished that I had indeed so rich a measure of grace. I believed (of course I am speaking of very early days) that all who subscribed largely to objects of public charity, burned with an intense zeal for the welfare of their poorer brethren; and again I "gave God glory therefore," desiring that He would bestow on myself as ample means, that I might emulate their noble thirst for the truest kind of honourable distinction—the relief of our suffering fellow-creatures. Was an individual wealthy, I accounted him most happy; for I could not believe that he who had largely the power of befriending the unfortunate, could lack opportunities of the most luxurious enjoyment. Was a man poor, I deemed that he possessed a privilege denied to others less unfavourably circumstanced—a direct and amply confirmed appeal to the aid and support of the more opulent. And again I pronounced my *Laus Deo!* and added "Amen."

Then I gave to each profession its full and properly distinguishing share of those qualities which best beseemed its peculiar character. For me every clerk was learned—every soldier brave. Was some important-looking stranger pointed out as belonging to the rarer tribe of poets or philosophers, forthwith (I smile now at the recollection) used to flash on my

mind an indistinct irradiation of mysterious grandeur, that seemed to form a peculiar atmosphere around his steps—an atmosphere of dim, antique glory, peopled with soul-eyed, sublime beings, that kept him company, wherever he "walked majestic" among his fellow-men. In brief, I clothed him with all the fanciful attributes, which we attach to the personified memory (if I may use such a term) of a Homer, a Shakspeare, or a Milton—of an Aristotle, a Bacon, or a Newton. I speak, of course, of the days of opening boyhood; while yet the lingering impressions of nursery lore, derived from the magic publications of a Tabart, were forming a congenial alliance with the maturer delights associated with the romances, novels, and "tales of surprising adventure," of the circulating library. The world was then like a beautiful map of the globe, presenting an unknown space intersected with its gaily-coloured divisions, and looking like an interesting puzzle—a pleasing game of chance—a maze of curious amusement, rather than that which I have since found it to be—but of later discoveries I will not yet speak. I felt that I lived but for pleasure; and deemed, or desired, that others existed only for the same end. I had not yet practically learned the fatal curse of the loss of Paradise. *Happy age!* when the mind was as bright as the skies that smiled over us; or as the fresh green turf that spread so lovingly beneath our feet! The thoughts of childhood abound with poetic sensibility:

fancy, undiverted by the cold appeals of judgment, revels in the luxurious indulgence of a thousand beautiful illusions, which, connecting themselves with the exterior objects of sense, spread a charm of limitless enjoyment over the dull realities of the scenes around us; and invest all that is interesting to our early perceptions—whether amid the stores of art or nature—with a lustre and a dignity of colouring, to which our future impressions, corrected by the sober test of experience, can never aspire.

The theatre was to me a sort of "enchanted crystal," or magic mirror, wherein were "lively represented" all those charmingly-diversified events, that make up the sum of earthly or imaginary vicissitude. In the apparent reality of the scenes there witnessed the plastic mind of youth lost all sense of its own condition, and expanded with rapture, or contracted with despair, as the train of mimic incidents called forth the alternately prevailing passions that chequered the story of the night. Tragedy, comedy, melo-drame, opera, burletta, vaudeville, ballet, and pantomime, how did they combine and vary and metamorphose their spell-like moods and influences, to maintain their mighty hold of my enamoured spirit! The reflected experience of ages, the lofty daring of high-souled adventure, the tender vanquishment of love, the rich effusions of burlesque humour, the deep grandeur of melancholy imagery, the pathos, the wit, the drollery, the magic variations of scenery, the *bizarre* dresses

and decorations, the tender, or sublime, or gaily-sportive music, the crowd of gratified and applauding spectators—all, all presented a world of happiness and pleasing excitement, that made life what I then thought it was originally intended to be—a scene of innocent and delightfully-varied enjoyment!

In those halcyon days, a trip to the great metropolis, or to a distant watering-place, was as a visit to some enchanted island, upon which the sun never set! It was then that new feelings and desires were awakened, new sensations called forth, new ideas elicited; every moment gave birth to absorbing perceptions of the infinite variety of fresh characters, dispositions, passions, and pursuits, that are played off on the broader stage of the world. Peeps were these into the show-glass of society—glimpses of life to be treasured by the school-boy optimist—samples of the lore of experience, as opposed to, or coalescing with, the previous teachings of imagination. Hence were conceptions and speculations multiplied to fond excess, in those subsequent depths of hermit-like seclusion, which seemingly closed too soon over the gay indulgences of earlier curiosity—over the boy's first eager contemplation of the gay things of active life—over his first ardent commentaries on the frolic philosophy of the crowd, in the haunts of pleasure and modish resort.

Again was there a change in the emotions of my youthful spirit.

Solitary contemplation, the study of the purer writers of antiquity, the habitual communion with nature, amid scenes of calm and peaceful beauty, awoke new and holier and more delicious perceptions, —far intenser aspirations. Then arose a *world within,* of which I had before no prospect—a world of infinite and ceaseless delight, blending itself with all that was beautiful and interesting in the realms of imagination, of society, and of nature. The stores of Greek and Roman literature crowded upon me—the spells of nature deepened into closer familiarity. I fed my mind with the thoughts of sages—with the loftiest inspirations of the bards of old. I lived a charmëd life—a life of constant *soul*-intercourse—a life whose thoughts, feelings, and passions, were drawn from the cherished fountains of classic sublimity and beauty, and from the blissful and harmonious revelations of the groves and skies, the meadows and the waters. Thine, O REPTON, was the beatifical sphere of those hours of privileged communion with the spirit of nature and of poesy! In thy tranquil and venerable shades was accumulated a fund of bosom-wealth, which, through every change or modification of coming time, should bear with it a talisman forming a world of rapture within, uninfluenced by the fleeting events and circumstances of the chequered future!

But years passed on. Other scenes awaited me. 'Change' is the motto of our earthly being! The device on the wheel of Time is ever 'Onward!'

And now the trammels of the every-day world pressed around me. The pursuit of new and harsh-seeming lines of study was opened to the toil of progressive application. The acquisition of professional knowledge was, however, relieved of its natural weariness, by the interposition of literary and scientific intercourse, a free correspondence with the pleasures of society, and a continued communication with the more elevated branches of the *belles lettres*, as connected with the kindred pursuits of classic and antiquarian lore. Field sports, continental travel, a fast-growing indulgence in the accumulation of literary pleasures, the society of men of letters, and the opening charms of a habit of poetic and miscellaneous composition, exerted their strong and varied influences on an elastic temperament, and rendered more and more irksome the restraints of legal study and confinement. As a wider horizon from day to day expanded on the mental eye, with its multiplied perceptions, and enlarged scope of experience, I continued to feel more and more how utterly and painfully at variance was that enthusiastic love which I had cherished for the pages of ancient lore, and for the spells of poetry and imagination, with the dry, mechanical, matter-of-fact, and arbitrary details of juridical science, and with the cold, repulsive, *soul*-subduing intercourse—the low, narrow, selfish feelings—the sordid calculations—and the hackneyed, dry, sophisticated, callous rules and observances of the world of daily-business. Whether

the Muses, or Themis, with her yellow-complexioned mate, the god of the modern Ephesians, hight Mammon, would have gained the ascendency, is a question not admitting of mathematical solution; nor is it a point worthy of being mooted now or hereafter. Suffice it to say, that a more powerful authority than that of each broke in upon the contention,—

"And turned the wavering strife of the debate."

The Fates, who governed Jupiter himself, threw the weight of their friendly influence into the happy scale of the Muses; and Themis, with her yellow-visaged confederate, kicked the beam. Now, although the Fates are generally represented as 'three old women,' yet I for one am bound to speak of them with respect, for their kind act in thus divorcing me from my unwilling labours in the dull, ungenial, harsh-resounding sphere of the Forum, and casting my cheerful lot amid the palm-trees, laurels, and fountains of Pindus, Helicon, and Parnassus, where I am daily blessed with the society of the 'young, beautiful, and modest virgins,' who preside over those picturesque and age-hallowed solitudes!

But, throwing aside this figurative language, and again addressing myself to the literal, I thus withdrew, with no regret, from the more crowded walks of life, seeking an humble retreat in the bosom of calm retirement, and sharing once more those kindred scenes of beauty and repose, which were rendered

additionally interesting by their familiar association with the earlier studies of youth. Such are the influences that now surround me. A wide correspondence with men of letters—an association with the leading literary and scientific institutions—a free access to the rare stores of libraries, abounding with the treasures of ancient and modern learning—and the prosecution of labours variously connected with history, topography, genealogy, heraldry, numismatics, and other component branches of archæological science, engage pleasingly and serviceably enough the large amount of leisure, which a close retirement from the busier scenes of society is calculated to afford.

I commenced this digression from my narrative, with some remarks on the earlier impressions which an untutored judgment, and a highly-speculative fancy, formed of the characters of mankind; I now lay before the reader a sample of the maturer results of observation, derived from a closer and more familiar view of the world. I need scarcely observe, in reference to the latter portion of my review of the experiences of life, that, during a pretty-close intercourse with society, I have seen occasions manifold for withdrawing those confiding feelings of respect with which I once (as I have before said) habitually regarded the seeming saint, the munificent alms-giver, the rich man rejoicing in the overflowing treasures of his hoarded wealth, the poor man steeped to the lips in the despair and misery of his utter bereavement, the clerk with

his long and boastful prate of the days of college-distinction, the soldier "bearded like the pard," with not a word but "spoke plain cannon," or flashed upon the mental eye its "air-drawn dagger;" and, in a word, all the variously-contrasted characters which mingle in the vast and stirring drama of human life. Hypocrisy, meanness, ostentation, avarice, uncharitableness, ingratitude, empyrical pretence, thrasonical boasting, and a very mob of other vices and failings, have either stood confessed, or lurked in vain beneath the specious mask of their opposite characteristics. I could cover page after page, and sheet after sheet, with curious examples of the wild inconsistency and gross extravagance, that so eloquently give the lie to the cheat of external appearances. I shall, however, spare the reader and myself a painful, and not too edifying survey of such cases. A few instances may suffice. Many would cloy. The beautiful and impressive language, exhibited in a series of panegyrics on the Reformed Church, and on religion itself in the abstract, penned by a late atheistical editor of one of the leading newspapers, may be cited as a well-known case of contrariety, in respect to *acts and their authors.* It is to me, also, a melancholy consideration, that the best sermons which I ever read, with the exception of those of South and Jeremy Taylor, were written by a debauched low-comic actor in a spunging-house, with the ignoble purpose of wiping off a gin score! As instances of the startling opposition between *station and*

conduct, I can assure the reader, too truthfully, that I have heard profane oaths and ribald jests proceed from the lips of one of the "venerable" judges of the land, which might have shamed the similar eloquence of a Newmarket jockey, or a Billingsgate fishwoman; and I have seen an autograph letter of one of our most distinguished Lord Chancellors, addressed to a clergyman, with the offer of a valuable living in Kent, and bearing this remarkable postscript:—"P.S. The Bishop of Chester says, *it's a damned good house.*" Then, as samples of the discrepancy between station and means, I may record the facts following, to wit: —I have seen a butcher (still in the full exercise of his trade) proceeding to town in his own carriage-and-four, with all suitable appointments; and I have noticed a baronet in the act of discharging his salaried duty of whipper-in to a pack of subscription-harriers. And now, to speak more generally, I have laughed at vulgarity in ermine, that would have disgraced the lowest *parvenu;* and at ignorance in "high places," which would have coupled well with the intellectual displays of some hedge-schoolmaster of Connaught. I have seen moral nobility in rags, and patrician greatness creeping through the veins of the scoundrel. I have detected pride and fraud, "envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness," under the surplice of the learned divine; and sterling truth and honesty, good sense and right feeling, beneath the uncouth garb of the illiterate mechanic. I have shuddered at

the depths of awful inanity, betrayed by some chance turning aside of the veil which covered the superficial pretensions of empyrical arrogance, that bore the title of "legally qualified;" and I could give the names of several irregularly-educated practitioners, whom the College of Physicians would not choose to summon before them, in order to an examination for the grade of licentiate, lest such "downright quacks" should pass the ordeal so creditably, that the college could not refuse to admit them as members of their own body. In fine, I have practically learned, long ago, that life may be justly compared with the scenes of a masquerade, where, as *Macbeth* says of another matter, "Nothing is, but what is not!" It is, in sooth, described by an old writer of the last century, as "a mere chance-medley of fools and villains, with here and there an honest man habited in a plain domino, rather looking on than bearing a share in the motley scene;" a remark that may remind the reader of *Hamlet's* older observation—"Ay, sir, to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand."

A word or two on the objects which prompt the insincere deference and pretended respect of too many individuals towards those whose superior station, unsupported by personal worth, has rendered the act of such homage a matter of worldly policy, or selfish interest. I may associate with such remarks a few desultory observations on the subject of those in-

fluences which a state of prosperity usually exercises on the possessor, and on those with whom he is more immediately connected. For this purpose I avail myself of a passage which occurs in a yet unpublished work of mine, "New Men, New Manners: or, Scenes of To-day and Yesterday. By One who is proud to write himself a Gentleman of the Old School;" that is intended to treat of the gay scenes of fashionable life, and of the stirring realities of every day experience, as opposed to the scenes of seclusion, and of contemplative abstraction, which mark the course of the narrative presented to the reader in the present volumes.

"Life is still perceived to be an estimable possession to those who are born to look at the world through plate glass—who, when rolling along in their brilliant carriages-and-four, proceeded or followed by gaily apparelled outriders, may observe, if they condescend to take notice, that the great bulk of God's creatures are compelled—however weary or impotent—to employ their own feet, for 'loco-motive' purposes; who, gazing from their gilded halls and saloons on the decorated scenes without, recognise no objects save such as are calculated to inspire sentiments of pride and self-gratulation,—lawns, parterres, parks, lakes, woods, temples, obelisks, stately bridges, fountains, as well as all that rich *melange* of incidental images—red and fallow deer, game and aquatic fowl, led horses and liveried retainers, miniature yachts and

pleasure boats, with their crested or ciphered ensigns fluttering gaily in the breeze, groups of aristocratic promenaders, casual equipages and equestrians, with a crowd of other characteristic appearances, which so generally and picturesquely diversify the *demesnes propres* that stretch around the great hereditary châteaux of our chief nobility.

"It is—it must be—pleasant to impress the eye with a long perspective of dazzling plate, and glittering candelabra, so often as the board is spread for our repast,—to meet with no kind of viands that seem not, with peculiar emphasis, to recommend themselves, and, as it were, to solicit our more particular approbation,—to gaze around us on the faces of the beautiful and the happy-looking, and to know that (humanly speaking) ours is the potent spell that shall attach all those guests and inmates to our side, as long as we may wish for their society. What, indeed, says that greatest of all painters of the human heart, Shakspeare?

> 'Prosperity's the very bond of love;
> Whose fresh complexion and whose heart together
> Affliction alters.'

"Prosperity is a great quickener to the growth of the affections; the generality of hearts are found to thrive best in a warm and genial soil. The great masses of mankind, and the world of so called 'Fashionable Life,' to an individual, metaphorically obey the instinct of the swallow, and 'shift

their abode with the sunbeams.' Hence the rich and the great have many friends, and many admirers. Hence, also, they have few who esteem them for themselves—who would love them, and cling to them, through all weathers. But this they see not. To those who are thus privileged and honoured, caressed and worshipped, seldom, if ever, comes the reflection that they owe all the blandishments and deference, the adulation and servility, with which they are habitually treated, to the one great talisman that rules all—or nearly all—hearts,—wealth, rank—money, and money's influence! They dream rather that they are indebted for this flattering distinction to their own personal recommendations—to the high qualities of their minds, and the lavish endowments of their persons—to their singularly pleasing manners and accomplishments—to their amiable characters. Hence! base, deceiving visions! cheat the mind of the titled rich no longer! Let him see—ay, and feel, too—the real worth of the friendships of courtiers, and of the ultra-modish 'hangers-on' of 'fashionable life.' Let him estimate, at their true value, those smiles of varied admiration, and those delicate testimonies of homage, which uniformly combine to spread an atmosphere of 'charmed brightness' through those sumptuously-stored apartments, so rich in the congregated splendours of pictures, statuary, and *bijoutèrie*—so replete with the minor elegancies of velvet and brocade hangings, mirrors and

chandeliers, and with the gorgeous and luxurious decorations, and subsidiary fittings, which add to the grand *coup d'œil* of that sparkling and variegated interior. Let him know how soon those exquisitely-lovely women that grace his festive board, and who seem to bloom, and spread around their fascinations, but to delight his privileged eye, would fly with disgust and very loathing from that board, were it stripped of its delicately-shining damask, its pompously-escutcheoned dishes, the profuse blaze of aromatic lights above, its spells of patrician state and magnificence. Let him learn how quickly those 'curled and silken minions' of supreme *ton*—those trimly moustached and daintily-essenced specimens of ex-manhood—those half-nondescript compounds of apes, women, eunuchs, and dolls—with their elaborated ringlets, and blonde-edged, French cambric pocket-handkerchiefs, their lace fronts and ruffles, and pearl-mounted eye-glasses, would vanish,—yes, in less time than each would occupy in the graceful *abandon* of a single Bond Street yawn,—were so cruel and unforeseen an event to transpire, as the loss of those choice vintages of *Sillery* and *Clôs-de-Vougeot*—of those artistically-prepared dishes that evidence the perfection of Parisian refinement. Let him learn how soon the exquisites of a less effeminate cast—a sort of *quasi*-improved breed of the Squire Western class, with more polish and less humour than their great prototype,—would simultaneously disappear—

ay, in the twinkling of one single puff of their own cigar smoke,—with the crack stud or kennel, and the well kept preserves, the coronetted britschkas and their dashing blood greys or chestnuts, that minister so pleasingly to the all-absorbing passion—the one imperious principle of such minds—the love of self, *self*, SELF! These are things that are not whispered in the ear of great men by their modish 'hangers on,' and therefore shall they now be uttered; and for what the world of fashionable loungers may declare on the matter, I care not a 'beggarly denièr.' Their emmet-like faculties and propensities shall not escape my microscopic glance."

Let me devote a few additional sentences to a consideration of the motives which too often induce authors to pay their court at the shrine of political greatness; while I take notice also of the cold, disheartening neglect, and sordid illiberality, which too often accompany the affectation of literary patronage.

If we look at the dedications of authors in general, we shall find that they are full of affected veneration for the high qualities of the noble patrons to whom they are addressed. They abound with pompous eulogies that express much, but virtually signify—nothing; partaking of the same nature as *Macbeth's* sarcastic summary of life:—

"— A tale,
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing;—"

uniting the gross insincerity of the practised courtier, with the scarcely-concealed contempt of one who in his heart holds in utter abhorrence this revived idolatry of the "Golden Calves;" this prostitution of wit to wealth—of mind to money. The mean cupidity evidenced on the part of such writers, is aptly accompanied by the absurd vanity and abject folly of those who put their trust in such inflammatory exaggerations of regard. In such cases, we scarcely know which party to despise most—the deceiver or the deceived. Such dedications, even when addressed to men of the most illustrious merit, have the effect of caricatures; as, for instance, where Dryden tells the Duke of Buccleugh that his Grace's warlike acts had gone far beyond those of *Achilles;* or, where he assures the Duke of Newcastle, that, while other victorious generals had been more or less indebted to fortune for their successes, his Grace had ever made fortune his slave! I remember many other cases of such nauseous flattery, on the part of writers of eminence; but the examples given may suffice to shew the despicable nature of such grovelling addresses, which Dr. Cotton has well satirized in his well-known lines:—

> "When bards extol their patrons high
> Perhaps 'tis gold extorts the lie;
> Perhaps the poor reward of bread."

There are patrons and authors, however, of a severer taste, and of more manly sentiments,—patrons, making use of that degree of common sense, which

enables them to see through and utterly contemn the flimsy pretences of the self-interested and sycophantic adulator; and authors, with that degree of common honesty which forbids them to flatter where they cannot praise, or to stoop to low, servile arts to win the approbation which ought, indeed, under such circumstances, to be considered a disgrace, rather than a distinction. And here let me ingenuously confess my opinion, that a work which carries with it the marks of intelligence and research, has a just claim on the discriminating auspices of the Great, who receive, rather than confer an honour, when their names are prefixed, in the character of patron, to its pages. Hence, therefore, I cannot but view with peculiar contempt, those laboured acknowledgments of obligation and gratitude, which, with such abject meanness of spirit, the generality of our learned and ingenious authors esteem it decorous to string together, in the dedication of their works. The reader will approve of the candour with which I state my belief, that if those literary speculators could see beforehand how little in the shape of true patronage—that is to say, of actual support and recommendation of their writings, and of endeavours to secure a due reward for their talent and diligence,—they would, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, receive from their "honoured and thrice-esteemed patrons,"—could they hear beforehand, the few lightly-uttered words of "crimosine silke," (as our old writers often term the

mere phrases of compliment,) which would comprise all that they would derive from their so-called "protectors," in acknowledgment of their pains to do honour, by the ascription of their long and toilsome labours to the Great,—we should hear less of the "passionate zeal," and of the "ardent sense of duty," with which they so plentifully bestrew their humble approach to the hoped-for Mecænas. But, as I have before intimated, there are honourable exceptions to the meanness of sentiment too generally evinced by both parties; and I trust, indeed, that the connection of patron and client, established through the medium of the Dedication prefixed to this work, may be considered as one of them. I may now as ingenuously add, that, if there be few *Mecænases*, there are few writers that deserve the measure of Augustan patronage.

The hyperbolical praisers, before spoken of, are like the painted world of dinner-moths that flutter around a great man's table—motes in the sunbeam of prosperity—creatures of the summer-breeze—echoes only of the voice of mirth—things that one breath of misfortune would scatter afar, as the leaves of the forest are dispersed by the chilling influence of the autumn-gale! From such unmanly beings as these do I shrink with disgust, and with very loathing! I am a lover of candour, even for its own sake, and value it most when it smiles detectively on the mask of successful speciousness. Wealth and hereditary honours claim no share in the Dedication of these volumes. My mo-

tives are of a truer and higher nature. I choose not my patron for his social and political rank, but for his generosity of disposition, his frankness of spirit, and cordial urbanity of demeanour. My respect and consideration are tendered to the man, and not to the noble. To speak candidly, I have never thought that, where nature had bestowed liberally her endowments, the absence of fortune's gifts was a matter calling for much regret; and where fortune had exhausted her bounty, and nature had proved a churl, I have felt nothing but profound pity for the unhappy object of such a preference. In a word, the Earl will know and feel that I speak the truth, when I utterly disclaim all other views than a sincere and manly desire to shew the high sense which I entertain of those personal qualities which I have but inadequately particularized in the former part of my Dedication. The colouring of flattery would not be less repulsive to his Lordship's delicacy, than to those feelings of self-respect which a deep, abiding sense of candour must ever conciliate and support in my own bosom. But, to continue the train of more general observation. That the world was always a stage of crime and imposture, of fraud, folly, insincerity, and treachery, I 'most powerfully and potently' believe. That it is worse now than ever it was before, may be doubtful; and Solomon, surnamed the Wise, tells us that it is not good to inquire too curiously into the past, and to say that other times were better than our own. But,

with all due deference to so learned an authority as that of the 'Oracle of the East,' I am certain that if Solomon had existed in our own times, he might have been convinced of the truth of my remark, when I say that the simplicity of manners, and the earnest warmth of hospitality, which characterized a period within my personal recollection, are now scarcely to be found. And, alas! with the more simple and homely forms of life, have departed, also, those grand and picturesque features of national pride and enthusiasm, which made England the 'brave isle' that she was in the stirring days of her Drakes and her Raleighs. The hearty contempt which even our more immediate ancestors indulged for the petty, carking cares of Mammon, and for the frivolous affectations of modish assumption, may be cited, as a feeling of bygone and obsolete expression. 'Mira temporis inclinatio!' We may significantly deplore the changes of our own times in the words of our great Dramatist:—

> "There 's nothing serious in mortality;
> All is but toys: renown, and grace, is dead;
> The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
> Is left this vault to brag of."

Welcome, then—at least for a time—the sylvan shade, and the pleasures of solitary meditation; let us quit awhile the feverish masquerade of the crowd, for a life wherein there is no need to—

> —"make our faces vizards to our hearts,
> Disguising what they are."

Feelings and convictions of this nature have gone far towards making me a lover of antiquity. I had, however, from a very child, a passion for the dim mysteries, the curious relics, and the mistily-shrouded, half-preserved recollections of the elder cycles and phases of being. I was perhaps *born* an Antiquary, and any other train of social and educative influences would but have elicited similar results of character. I am apt, indeed, to believe (for I love the thought) that it is the blood of the old Skalds and Vikingr of the North, flowing through the ancestorial veins of the noble *Bernards* of Upper Saxony, as derived through the numerous royal and famous alliances of that chivalric house, and transmitted to the *Ports* (1), Lords of *Basing* and of *Hortyard Howme*, which gives *me*, their humbler but as proud descendant, the sympathy which I feel for by-gone ages—for the 'deeds of the days of other years;' and that prompts the vivid remembrance which I keep as the best treasure of my intellectual stores, of the acts of those noble and mighty beings who are now no more.

Every change which the utilitarian spirit of the age exerts over the failing grandeur of the "glory-enthroned" past, seems to myself only the addition of another tie of love to those heart-treasured memories, whose radiance is as a lamp of enchanted power, to dispel the darkening influences, and despotic usurpations of the present. With the same earnest love that

the bard of Rydal (2) has manifested, in behalf of his revered home, amid the lakes and mountains of our Northern Switzerland, now threatened by the demon of modern innovation with railroads and all their attendant evils; do I nurse over, and cherish the picturesque beauties and romantic associations of that peaceful region in which my own lot has been cast; and which is also assailed, at the present moment, with the same hostile threats of vulgar aggression. The loveliest scenes and most endeared historical sites seem, by some angry caprice of destiny, to be those most especially selected for the theatre of spoliation. The records of the past will soon be all that is left to tell us of the once surpassing grandeur, and most graceful attributes, of our finest English scenery. Alas! the *hearts* of Englishmen are changed! The time has been when the slightest derangement of a pillar or post, in some venerated resort of the worshippers of genius, or the infliction of some vile discrepancy on the consecrated beauties of one of Nature's most favoured temples, would have been hailed with general and damning execration. Witness the destruction of Shakspeare's mulberry tree, and other notorious instances of the like barbarity. Now, let but the appearance—yea, the remotest glimpse of pecuniary advantage be suggested for their removal, and down go the towers of heroic ages, the groves of a thousand summers; the relics which Time himself had refrained, in very pity, from dooming to

desolation! Down they go; and the reckless marauder hugs himself on his superior patriotism, taste, and science! He has benefited, he will tell you, by the act of desecration; and he sneers (as well he may) at the lamentation of those who looked on during the progress of destruction, and, when it was over, saw, for the first time, that they might have prevented it, had they chosen to oppose the evil (3).

There are few individuals whose countenance I should so much esteem as that of my present patron (4), in relation to a work which has for its principal object the characteristic development of those prouder lineaments of antiquity, which contrast themselves so gloriously with the mean, narrow, formal, affected, and selfish features of a later age. Such an enterprise has a peculiar claim on the patronage of a Chesterfield, and is worthy of the best exertions of the humble author. It appeals to the support of all who would seek to restore the bold, free, generous, high-hearted, patriotic feelings of our forefathers; and can be disapproved of by none but those degenerate beings, who sympathize with the number-one-respecting, coldly-cautious, circumventing, canting, stiff, precise, nice, hypocritical, pence-calculating, fanatical, avaricious, inhospitable, and (to give thirteen epithets to the dozen, in accordance with the liberality of a better day) beggarly notions of the present! The ill opinion of such parties I should

value. Ruffs and rapiers! Let them blame my book as they please. I will reply to their hostility, if they dare to shew any, with a more concentrated energy of contempt and derision! *Bismillah!* Like Sir Ernest Oldworthy, I have ever possessed a deeply-seated admiration for the lofty feelings, and munificent acts, that distinguished the character of our more generous and patriotic forefathers. One of my chief enjoyments, in a life of deep retirement and solitary study, is to contrast the stirring recollections of the "years of old"—the sublime traits of heroism—the stern, self-denying principle of active benevolence—the awe-tempered enthusiasm of religious zeal—the manly, open-hearted courtesy, and the frank, unstudied kindness, that so generally and significantly marked the past, with my experienced observation of the more petty aims and pursuits of the living world around me, its selfish and coarsely-concealed meanness—its characteristic sordidness, and vulgarity of conception—its almost total abandonment of all those ennobling motives—those grand principles, that tended to associate glory with happiness, and to establish a higher and more passionate sense of enjoyment, instead of the dull feeling of self-styled comfort, or 'snugness,' and the narrow views of so called 'utility,' upon which this later age so humiliatingly seems to pride itself. We have in sooth exchanged the Baron for the Grocer—the dais for the shop-counter, and the fleecy, floating feathers, the velvet, ermine, and cloth

of gold, for the—psha! psha! I will spare myself the disgust of the antithesis. As my dear and honoured friend, the author of "Our Village," says, in a letter some time ago addressed to me—"We live under the matter-of-fact rule of *steam-engines* and *railways*, and the *horses* are banished from the land!"

It is now too much the fashion to depreciate every feeling of the past, and to misrepresent its features and characteristics. Nothing, it may be observed, is easier than to condemn on mere supposition; but to admire and respect is the due result of a knowledge of facts, which, on subjects of this nature, few, comparatively speaking, will give themselves the trouble to acquire. They want it not, forsooth; their judgment serves them sufficiently well without. There are no ages, however, so dark as those which, having light at their command, will not make use of it. The so-called "Dark Ages" were light indeed compared with such as these! I have heard illiterate people—ay, and some that would not willingly be considered such—remark upon the barbarianism and savage tastes of their Anglo-Saxon forefathers, in the earlier days of Christianity; while I felt certain that, to borrow the words of an elegant writer, "if we could revisit the halls of our ancestors, such as they were during this period, instead of regarding them, as we are too apt to do, as the abodes of untaught savages, we should rather be prompted to consider them as the seats of

refinement and the haunts of the Muses." But to return from this digression.

Adopting, thus, the colouring of a poetical and romance-loving nature, which ever seeks to disport itself among the plumy splendours of chivalry, and amid the bright, vision-like realities of yore, I behold under a somewhat disguised aspect, and with feelings of alienation and dislike, the more useful and refined but less picturesque and exciting characteristics of men and manners, as evidenced in the political and social features of the current times. If, therefore, in my occasional comparison between things past and present, I have now and then commented on the latter in a more depreciatory tone than the strict measure of modern desert may have fairly authorized, I take this opportunity of stating, once and for all, that I am too apt to survey the scenes and circumstances of the living world around me through the barred visor of antiquity; or, as my utilitarian opponents might be pleased to say, through the horn-spectacles of the "Dark Ages." Like Nimrod, the hunter, I am an eminent builder of castles in the air. Most people have their *châteaux en Espagne* of one sort or other, and I have mine;—tall, noble piles frowning with majestic solemnity on the petty kick-shaw erections—the spick-and-span finery of this flimsy age. They are cullised and moated, and bannered and turreted, in the true old warrior-guise of the Plantagenet era; while plumed and armoured figures tread haughtily

their pillared halls and canopied chambers. The smile of high-born beauty lights up their dark galleries: their soaring battlements re-echo the trumpet-blast: and the mailed steed dashes the fiery sparks from his impatient hoof, as, with pricked ears and elevated crest, he wildly gazes on the flapping banner of the keep. Nor disclose these aerial illusions the mere casual and transient colouring of a day-dream. They are indebted, for their more frequent spell over my mind, to a conscious certainty that the legitimate blood of the most honoured princes of our earlier dynasties, and of many of the heroes of loftiest fame in those distant annals, has circulated in the veins of the elder line of my humble, yet thus highly-honoured house. In perusing the achievements of our ancient and most chivalric kings, or of those great barons whose overgrown power and warlike capacity was a source of perpetual dread to the proudest monarchs that swayed the British sceptre, my heart leaps up and says, "These noblest names in the history of your country are associated by the strong, *heaven*-bound ties of blood and of hereditary spirit with your own. The same vital current that warmed the heart of an Edward the First, and, in an earlier day, glowed in the breast of him, the glorious one, surnamed 'The Conqueror,' has flowed down, through the noble or knightly families of Bohun, Courtenay, Luttrell, Stratton, Andrewes, and Sulyarde, to enrich, with its royal and exalted essences, the *hearts* of your nearest kin-

dred; and this, too, *without the blemish of one illegitimate link in that illustrious chain of descent.*" These are proud feelings, and worth all the wealth that the world could offer, coupled with the base addition of hereditary obscurity. Through what magnificent vistas of genealogical dignity, stretching through the shadowy regions of far antiquity, till lost in the darkness of obscuring fable, may not the sharer of a pedigree connected with that of our First Edward be permitted to trace the sources of his various descent! And how great is his privilege, who, as in the instance adverted to, can sympathise with the possessors of such rare distinction, in the nearest collateral members of his own family! He may claim, with my worthy friend Sir Ernest Oldworthy, as recorded in the present work, the sublime honour of writing the venerable name of Odin himself in his chart of pedigree, 'of ranking gods as well as kings' in his family-line!

Like the patriarch, Joseph, I am a mighty dreamer of dreams. From earliest youth upwards, have I delighted to indulge in the visionary abstraction which withdrew the soul from the common intercourse of life, that it might expand itself in the glorious sunshine of ideal bliss, which bathed those spreading lands of the spirit in an atmosphere of unearthly splendour. Nor have those visitations of high and mysterious thought, those lofty and impassioned communings with the Deities of History and Romance,

transpired without a visible and abiding manifestation of their charmed influence. Many a token of those privileged revealings exists in these contemplative or storied pages; and will hereafter give birth, I trust, to more worthy evidences of the enthusiastic love which they have engrafted in my heart for all that is great and noble, lovely and impressive, in the wide realities of being. They are at once the wand and the circle, the creative and sustaining source of my feeble power; and claim, from a grateful pen, the willing testimony of their august inspiration, as implied in the characteristic title of "Visions of the Times of Old." To adopt a kindred figure, my Muse is an armed one, a sort of Gothic Minerva, now glittering in the rugged panoply of the warrior-ages of the North, now radiant with the blazoned pomp of later Chivalry—the device on her "moon-round" shield of cloudless azure, an eagle of golden plumage, ascending with outstretched wings and gory talons, — her *cri de la guerre*, "Onward, right onward!"

It is possible, however, that, writing in all the freedom of a spirit unfettered by considerations of a merely conventional cast, and utterly regardless of the influence of those sectarian and party feelings, which operate so extensively on the minds of individuals who mix much with the affairs of the world, I may have put forth an occasional remark, that appeared to myself, a dweller in the sequestered vale of

private and retired life, more obviously due and pertinent than it may have seemed to others, whose good opinion and sympathy I should yet much value; in which case, therefore, I am desirous to suggest, that such observations (if any) may be pardoned for the excess of candour in which they have originated, and for the worthiness of the motive that drew them forth. For this singularity of sentiment, or prejudice, or heresy (let the reader call it what he will), I alone, as an individual, am responsible. I seek not, at any moment, to avail myself of my patron's most esteemed countenance, as the supposed means of providing a tower of strength, from whose elevation (as reminded by his Lordship's ancient crest) I might shower down my hand-grenades* with a more commanding aim, and with a more lion-like audacity (5). Nay, I am freely willing to confess, in the hope that I may not offend any ingenuous party of the shrewder sort, whose views may differ from my own, in the comparison between past and present times, and in other matters flowing therefrom, that if there be but the smallest tincture of poetic truth in the basis of a theory favourable to the claims of antiquity, I am too much a lover of the pleasures of Imagination to relinquish it without regret, however opposed it may be to the mature impressions of a graver judgment; and I ab-

* These remarks apply more particularly to the contents of the ensuing chapters, wherein the degeneracy of modern times, as instanced in particular facts, is freely and faithfully exposed.

hor the cold inductions of your wiseacre, Reason,—looking upon them as the mere sophistry of some worn-out school-argument, when they would conspire to sap the foundations of one of my airy structures,—my "cloud-capt towers!"

The candid and ingenuous reader will not impute it to a motive of vanity, but to a feeling of sincere gratitude, if I should now allude to the numerous testimonies of public approbation with which my writings have been honoured. As these, and similar marks of private applause, have encouraged me to persevere in the laborious but honourable pursuits which my inclination naturally prompted me to embrace, I consider myself entitled to appeal to them, as affording some degree of justification and excuse for the apparent intrusion which might otherwise attach to my anxiously-repeated efforts to render my services, in the cause of literature, more worthy of general patronage. To those distinguished members of the literary body, who have so indulgently whispered a word of needful encouragement, I offer the just regard which is due to the generosity of motive that influenced such acts of cheering and consoling favour. To the liberality and kindness of the public-press, so amply exercised in my behalf, I owe a large debt of gratitude, which I shall ever have pride to acknowledge in terms of particular obligation; while to a numerous class of personal friends and patrons, comprising, I am proud to say, individuals of the highest

rank and most elevated character, who have so warmly and generously interested themselves in my success, I would, again and again, and yet more earnestly, return my heart-felt thanks for each and every manifestation of their sympathy and respect. And, lastly, to the public at large, I would sincerely state that my claims to patronage will ever be founded on the most scrupulous attention to accuracy in matters of research, on an undisguised expression of sentiment, whatever be the nature of my theme; and on the most zealous and untiring endeavours to promote the good Old English feelings and habits, that have too long been slighted — the love of home and kindred, in its widest sense of neighbourly and family alliance — the spirit of festive recreation, as opposed to the newfangled, puritanical pretences of the day — the deep, practical devotion of simpler times — the value of learning for its own sake — the gratitude and reverence due to the noble and brightly-shining munificence of the "Dark Ages" (6), — in a word, the old-fashioned and too long estranged virtues of patriotism, hospitality, generosity, and benevolence — objects and exertions which, I trust, will always secure to me that portion of the public esteem which is more to be coveted, than the highest honours accorded to mere intellectual superiority.

CHAPTER II.

SUNDRY DISCREET AND CURIOUS OBSERVATIONS ON OUR ANCESTORS AND OURSELVES.

P. HEN. I am now of all humours, that have shewed themselves humours, since the *old days* of goodman Adam, to the pupil age of this PRESENT twelve o'clock at midnight.

King Henry IV., Part i. act ii. sc. 4.

AN old French writer has pleasantly observed:— "I must be allowed my freedom in my studies, for I substitute my writings for a game at the tennis-court or a club at the tavern; I never counted among my honours these *opuscula* of mine, but merely as harmless amusements. It is my partridge, as with St. John the Evangelist; my cat, as with St. Dominick; my lamb, as with St. Francis; my great black mastiff, as with Cornelius Agrippa; and my tame hare, as with Justus Lipsius." I could not offer a more valid excuse for the somewhat wayward humours which I have been led to indulge, in the present course of my desultory lucubrations, than thus frankly and modestly to confess, that, like my worthy exemplar, Monsieur Catharinot, I have regarded rather the ease of my own faculties, by ex-

ploring such veins of thought as fancy or memory suggested for investigation, than the sympathetic impressions of the reader, who will, therefore, blame or acquit me, as he finds either course more congenial to his own ideas and temperament. I would say to thee, gentle reader, with my lively old Gascon acquaintance, Monsieur Montagne, in his "Essays," "I hope I shall do no wrong to speak what I think, and deserve not blame in imparting my mind. If it be not for thy case, it may be for my own; so Tully, Cardan, and Boëthius wrote 'de Consolatione,' as well to help themselves as others." Be it as it may, I will essay. Let it not, however, be thought that I am by any means of opinion that the theme which I have chosen is one devoid of ample resources for the stimulation of a pleasurable curiosity and for the gratification of a laudable interest. On the contrary, I feel convinced that it would have been difficult to have made a better choice, or to have fallen upon a subject more eligible for contemplation, at the present unprecedented period, when there seems to be an almost general desire to break down the boundaries of ancient prudence and foresight, and to substitute a thousand shallow theories, under the conceited and idle notion that we are a wiser people than our ancestors. I myself have lived too long in the world, and have looked too deeply into the current topics of the day, not to decide, without much difficulty, that there is a mass of vague pretension and reckless

innovation afloat in the public mind, a restless spirit of disturbance for disturbance's sake, that is as much opposed to the plain, simple, calmly-deliberative counsel of the past, as the skin-deep knowledge and the poor, brainless, sophisticated speculations, which couch themselves under the absurd motto "The March of Intellect," are oppugnant to the deep learning, philosophical temper, and patriotic feeling, of former times.

Of what (please the Gods!) have we men of modern days to boast, as claiming superiority to the persons or works of those who have gone before us? "Produce me a man now," as my venerable friend, Cornelius Scriblerus says, "of the age of an antediluvian, of the strength of Samson, or the size of the giants!" But, jesting apart, where are our Homers and our Virgils—our Demostheneses and our Ciceros? Have later times produced a Phidias or an Apelles? Have our warlike annals eclipsed the bygone glories of an Alexander or a Cæsar? Have our seminaries of public learning outrivalled, in the mental endowments of any of their most honoured members, the mathematical genius of an Euclid? Have our schools of mechanical science surpassed, in the efforts of their most ingenious aspirants, the marvellous, yet well-authenticated, skill of an Archimedes? Let me next address a word to our conceited professors of music, who will oblige me by answering the following plain questions, put to them, on a former occasion, by my worthy friend and accomplished brother-antiquary,

the aforesaid Cornelius. "Will any of your best hautboys encounter a wolf, now-a-days, with no other arms but their instruments, as did that ancient piper, Pythocaris? Have ever wild boars, elephants, deer, dolphins, whales, or turbots, shewed the least emotion at the most elaborate strains of your modern scrapers, all which have been, as it were, tamed and humanized by ancient musicians?" Then, again, will the best philosopher this day alive—"princeps hujus ætatis philosophorum"—presume to write his name on the same page, much less in the same line, with that of Francis Lord Bacon, as a benefactor to science, or even with that of his lordship's good old namesake, Roger Bacon, notwithstanding that the famous chancellor aforesaid and the worthy friar of Oxford, like Newton, at a comparatively recent period, dabbled somewhat in the mysteries of judicial astrology and in the transmutation of metals? Or will any *universal* genius amongst ourselves come forth and dispute the laurel which history has assigned to the brow of the "admirable Crichton?" "March of Intellect," *perdie!* the phrase must have been coined by some unlucky wag, to imply contempt for our pygmy pretensions, when compared with the grand performances of antiquity.

But, to continue the inquiry. Have succeeding ages given birth to any nobler specimen of royal paternity, than was evidenced in the rule of an Egbert, or an Alfred? In dramatic literature, do we,

men of the nineteenth century, boast a rival star to the lucid orb of Shakspeare? Have our antiquaries (bless the mark!) performed more good and faithful service than the Lelands, the Camdens, the Speeds, the Stows, the Dugdales, the Hearnes, and the Anthony a' Woods, of an earlier day? Marry, my fair cousin, we trow not. But we pretend, forsooth, to have discovered the means of travelling by steam; and we claim, on behalf of the Marquis of Worcester, in the comparatively recent reign of Charles the II., the honour of having invented the steam-engine; whereas, if due recourse be had to that excellent work, Navarete's "Collection of Spanish Voyages and Discoveries," it will plainly appear, that, in the year 1543, Blasco de Gavay, at Barcelona, made the first known experiment of propelling a vessel by the agency of steam. So much, therefore, for our loud boast of having detected an occult property of what has been, in the jargon of modern charlatanry, styled "the Fifth Element."

It is not doubted, however, that we have very largely added to the productive powers of machinery, a natural consequence of the almost exclusively mechanical spirit of the age. The productive powers of our senatorial illuminati have been equally prolific; and where there were once only five hundred acts of parliament, there may, for aught I know, be now five thousand; four-fifths of which might, probably, be deleted without loss. The art of political government has

gained little since the discovery of the Pandects of old Justinian. What, indeed, says my worthy and favourite author, Sir Francis Palgrave, as to the characteristics of the nineteenth century? "The spreading circuit of the workhouse, and the towering fabric of the jail, these will be the most lasting monuments of the nineteenth century, and of a people whose laws have shaped out a community in which every seventh man is either a criminal, or a pauper treated like a criminal!" Yes, true enough it is, that, where the common people had once nothing to do but to eat and drink, and gaze upon spectacles, or indulge in pastimes (for the hardest labour of former times may be considered pastime, as compared with the factory system, and other abominations of the present age!) they are now privileged to starve, to work their skin over their ears, to see their few goods in the hands of rascally bailiffs and their followers; and to drag out a wretched life, daily beholding their helpless families a prey to diseases, brought on by over-exertion, and by want and misery more oppressive and soul-subduing than the chains of the galleys, or the worst tortures applied to the worst of criminals! Is this statement doubted? Let the sceptic, if he have a heart for such investigations, search, as I have done, the dreary homes of the manufacturing poor, in the crowded, pestilential alleys and by-lanes of the so-called prosperous towns of Manchester and Nottingham, ere he dare to doubt my repre-

sentation! The factory-system is well designated by one of the speakers, at a late meeting of the Spitalfields silk-weavers, as "the most enslaving and degrading, revolting and accursed, that ever existed." For myself I can only say, in regard to these boasted improvements, these towering triumphs of an ostentatious age; blessed be the hour that shall once again give us, in lieu of a smoky iron track, with dark tunnels and mud banks, and dangerous open precipices, and lonely, sad-looking, station-houses, the fine, spacious, numerously-frequented roads (though not so good as our dear old "Via Vetelingia," and other works of the Anglo-Romans!) with their handsome, well-appointed coaches, cheerful, mirth-inspiring drivers, easy, comfortable inns; and, in place of the pale, miserable, stunted, decrepit, unhealthy, inmates of our pestilential cotton and woollen mills, and of our sorrowful Poor Law Union workhouses, the hearty hand-loom weavers, and other manual workers of the simpler contrivances of a preceding period, as well as the contented, happy, well disposed, and patriotic class of good old English labourers! As we write this passage, the village elm-rows, and the village-greens, enlivened with the little wealth of the thriving cottagers of the last century, return in imagination to mock us with the features of lost happiness.

We catch a glimpse of the once-loved sports of the green, and mark the rosy cheeks of the players. At the door of the village-inn hangs the well-known

magpie in its wicker-cage, an emblem of the cheerful gossip and broad vacant enjoyment within. The good old heavy waggon of former days, with its eight stately horses, pauses at that blithesome place of resort, while the stalwart old driver cheerily blows off the creamy froth from the quart-tankard ere he drains its copious depths. Improvement, quotha! Look to the increasing hardships and privations, the deepening toil and misery of the people—not to the more improved fashion of their shirt-buttons, or the better quality of their stockings! It is idle to boast of the luxury of a table-cloth, if the board be without meat; or of the dignity of a carpet, if the feet of the owner lack shoes. Alas! with the shining oak tables and sanded floors of the last century, as seen in the well-ordered houses of our shopkeepers and work-people, departed the owners' ancient privilege of filling their goblets of wood or pewter with strong beer of their own brewing, and of eating, from the corresponding homeliness of wooden trenchers, six meals a day, instead of five, if they had chosen! But the working-class are indulged, by the "giddy-paced vanity" of the times, with the higher title of the "industrial," or the "operative" class—an appellation, however, that boded an evil change from the olden comfort and less refined notions of their happier forefathers.

Hear, worthy reader, how the "premier Duke, Earl, and Baron of England, next the blood-royal, and chief of the family of the Howards," proposes to "make the

poor comfortable," in our own times! At an agricultural meeting at Steyning (reported in the "Magnet" newspaper of December 15, 1845), the Duke of Norfolk (chairman) said,—"In consequence of the badness of the potatoes in this country, they ought to pay more attention to the labourers this year than on ordinary occasions (cries of 'Hear'). There was a thing suggested to me the other day, which I am almost afraid to repeat, because a portion of the press perverted what I said on a former occasion, and turned it into ridicule. But I assure you that it matters very little to me, if I can add one moment's comforts to any poor man (cheers). Gentlemen, a thing was suggested, in a letter by a lady the other day, which certainly is very warm and comfortable to the stomach, if it can be got cheap. The other day when I was in London, I went to several places to inquire, and I bought a pound or two of it, because there is more difficulty attached to it than what we at first imagined. They have not been accustomed to it, and, perhaps, may not like the taste. I like it very much myself. In India a vast portion of the population use it; in fact, it is there to them what potatoes are in Ireland—I mean 'curry powder' (laughter). People may smile at it at first, but it is a very warm thing, made of peppers, and a variety of things of that description. If any gentleman will try and take a pinch and put it into hot water—I don't mean to say it will make a good soup, but this I say, that if a

man comes home, and has nothing better, it will make him warm and go to bed comfortable (laughter). It may create amusement, but if any gentleman will try it, he will find out what I say. I don't say it may be given in quantities; but with potatoes, or a little bit of bacon, or anything of that kind, it is like a pickle. People, whose appetites are fastidious, take pickle; and with this article, a pinch of it will make a meal extremely palatable and comfortable ('hear, hear'). I mean to try it among my labourers; and by doing that, I am sure, that if the winter comes on severe, we may add very much to the comforts of the poor ('hear, hear,' and suppressed laughter). I may be ridiculed hereafter for what I say; but, as I said before, I don't care what is said, so long as I can make the poor comfortable (cheers). I only recommend this to your notice, gentlemen."

The subject of the noble Duke's speech is too rich in comic interest, to allow me to refrain from giving what appears as a second edition of it. In a report of an agricultural meeting at Arundel, in the same paper, same date, we read as follows:—"The noble Duke then gave a second edition of the '*curry* business.' 'What he was going to say might make them smile, as it had done the meeting at Steyning. A lady had stated to him that she had given an article to the labourers of several parishes, and that there was at first a great difficulty in getting them to take it, but that she prevailed on them at last, and that it had

had a good effect. That article was 'curry powder' (laughter). Most people knew what curry was. It was made of Cayenne pepper, and hot spices of different descriptions; and he, for one, thought it was a pleasant thing to mix with rice. They all knew that it was a very comforting thing for the stomach; and he considered that a pinch thrown amongst the potatoes, or hashed meat, which the poor might happen to have, would give it flavour. He made this statement in the hope of doing good, and if it did good in one instance, it was something'" ('hear, hear').

What! can "the most noble Prince, Henry Charles Howard, Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal, and hereditary Earl Marshal of England; Earl of Arundel, Surrey, Norfolk, and Norwich; Baron of Mowbray, Howard, Segrave, Brewse of Gower, Fitzalan, Warren, Clun, Oswaldestre, Maltravers, Greystock, Furnival, Verdon, Lovetot, Strange of Blackmere, and Howard of Castle-rising,"* Premier Duke, Earl, and Baron of England, next the blood-royal, and chief of the family of the Howards, afford to emulate the low humour of one of Shakspeare's clowns, who offers to give a fasting man *the mustard* WITHOUT THE BEEF; an act that might well call forth the disdainful remark of *Gremio*, in "The Taming of the Shrew." "You may go to the devil's dam; your gifts are so good, here is none will

* Such, at least, is the mighty pageant of feudal honours, associated with the name of the representative of the Norfolk family, in the pages of Debrett.

hold you. Their love is not so great, *Hortensio*, but we may blow our nails together, and fast it fairly out; our cake is dough on both sides. Farewell."

But we will not yet bid our "farewell" to his Grace of Norfolk. We have not done with the Duke yet. Let us now witness how this "chief of the family of the Howards," this nobleman "next the blood-royal," further seeks to follow in the great steps of his illustrious ancestors!

> "What I am truly
> Is thine and my poor country's to command."

An instance more characteristic of times as they are cannot be adduced, in opposition to those which illustrate the spirit of the past, than that which is recorded in the following passage, as quoted from the same authority. "The noble chairman alluded to a subject on which he had spoken the last time he had filled the chair in that room, and to one of his observations, for which he had been dubbed the 'Pig-feeding Duke' (laughter). He did not mind being called a 'Pig-feeding Duke,' for he thought a duke who produced a good pig did some service to his fellow-men. [Scud aloof from the desecrated towers of Arundel, ye ancient shades of barons and bannerets, of lords treasurers and marshals of horse!] He had great respect for the press when they did that which he considered they ought to do; but when any portion of the press turned into ridicule or contempt what a man stated in

hope that he might be of service to his fellow-men, then he thought that that part of the press degraded itself, and ought to be treated with utter contempt. The reason of his being called the 'Pig-feeding Duke' was this,—at the commencement of the disease in potatoes, a statement had appeared in the newspapers, that the potatoes killed the pigs that were fed on them; and in order to try whether this was true or false, he shut up a couple of pigs by way of experiment. That was his 'pig-feeding' concern (laughter); and of that trial he communicated the result to the farmers. He would not trouble the meeting with any more remarks on this subject, and the editors might write till they wore their fingers out before he would notice them again."

Generous Howard! noble Norfolk! that bestowest with the same overflowing measure of wisdom and humanity, the favouring regards of thy ducal heart on beast as well as man; teaching that the one may be fed on *diseased* food, without prejudice to the loathing stomach; and presenting to the other, when oppressed with the cravings of hunger, and sinking almost under the day's wasting toil, a pinch of "curry powder," in a basin of hot water, and calling this "making him comfortable, and sending him warm to bed!"

— "O, my breast,
Thy hope ends here!"

Contrast, kind reader, this Arundelian effusion of

philanthropic sentiment, with the sterling benevolence, the hearty weight of hospitality, the cordial charity, the self-denying generosity of the days which are no more! Yet should I be sorry to suppose that his Grace of Norfolk's narrow views of relief for his suffering fellow-man, as thus expressed, found an approving echo in the hearts of any of the "noble princes," his compeers.

The Duke of Norfolk's speeches on the "curry business" drew forth, within my hearing, the following remarks of D—shire peasants. "I'cod, Tummus, Oi shud loike to gie 'im a good *curry* wi' our ould hoss-comb. Oi 'd scrat 'is d—d back for 'im!"—"An' Oi," said a second, "wud toie 'im t' a geat-post, an' bang 'is hoide wi' a neation heavy geat. By oud Dickons, if Oi wud ner kill 'im outreet, Oi 'd mak him as he wud ner live!"—"Oi wish th' oud beggur wor bursted wi' a big *Norfolk* dumplin!" cried a third (a young female), and here a loud and general burst of laughter restored the good humour of the party, and probably changed the subject of their chat. For myself I wished the duke, with all due respect for "the chief of the family of the Howards," a month's treatment on the system of the celebrated *Dr. Sangrado*, in "Gil Blas."

The Anti-Corn Law League will naturally make the most of the silly speeches of his Grace of Norfolk, and of his hollow compassion and mock generosity, so ridiculously self-exposed. Mr. Cobden's speech at

Covent Garden Theatre, at a late meeting of the League, gives us the following "Novel Receipts for Feeding the People." "I should not wonder if we should have some very novel receipts for feeding the people (loud cheers and laughter). Dr. Buckland has lately been publishing a paper, which he read before the Ashmolean Society at Oxford, and he has shewn, you know, that people can live very well on peas—that they get on tolerably well with beans, and if there is nothing else, they can live pretty well on mangel wurzel (great laughter). And he gives an instance, you know, of one good lady who lived, I don't know how many days, by sucking the starch out of her white pocket handkerchief (renewed laughter). Mangel wurzel, starch, and beans, mixed with a little 'curry powder,' I should think, would make a rich treat for starving people (much laughter). Well, we shall have divisions as well as debates, and I should like to see the names of those good men in the House of Commons who will vote against opening the ports—that is, of those men who will declare that we shan't be treated as well as Russians, Turks, Poles, and Dutchmen (cheers). If they outvote us on that proposition, we shall have a general election, and I should like to see some of those 'curry powder' candidates that will 'go down.' I would advise you to get some 'curry powder' ready; a little hot water, with a pinch of 'curry powder' stirred up, makes a man very comfortable to go to bed with! (laughter).

Try it on some of the protection candidates (much laughter)."

The late Christmas pantomime, at Drury Lane Theatre, had a hit at "Norfolk curry." Mister Punch has also had a *punch* or two at the venerable ribs of the "Earl Marshal and Hereditary Earl Marshal of England."

What a different picture is exhibited in the following extract from the papers of the same date:—"BRETBY PARK.—On Wednesday week, Bretby Park, the domain of the Earl of Chesterfield, presented to the public a scene of unusual gaiety and interest. It was the meet of Mr. Meynell Ingram's hounds. This justly celebrated pack, and a beautiful morning, attracted a good field. The poor of Bretby and his Lordship's workmen also met there to receive the annual munificent Christmas gift of beef, bread, and money. Every man, woman, and child in the parish, all his workmen, pensioners, their wives and families, having three pounds of beef, a loaf of bread, and sixpence in money each given to them on that day. The number was about six hundred. No person could witness this truly 'old English' exhibition without the most lively feelings of gratitude; first, to the Giver of all things; and secondly, to his Lordship, who possesses a heart to dispense them so much in accordance with His divine will. It is hard to say, whether the fox-hunters or the beef-eaters displayed the most cheerful countenances, the former anticipating good

sport, the latter good cheer; but the result proved the beef-eaters had the best of it, for there was no scent and bad sport. Lord Stanhope and Lady Eveline were present, and took great interest in the distribution, giving the money away with their own hands. We are happy to hear that his Lordship and family are come to spend their winter at Bretby, where much company is expected. We sincerely wish them health and happiness, and hope, ere this, many gentlemen have followed their example, and made glad the hearts of the poor, in their immediate neighbourhood." "It was delightful," says another account, "to see the handsome countenance of the noble Earl beaming with good nature, as it always is, now suffused with the happiness of benevolence; and the grateful thanks of the recipients of his bounty must not only have afforded him the highest gratification, but also have given a lesson to his beautiful children which they will never forget."

Not long ago we had a peer, (I am sorry that I cannot recollect his name, for it should have appeared here, "with all the honours!") who proposed that a *good long* draught of cold spring water should be tried, as a remedy for the craving pangs of a famishing stomach!! Does not the reader wish, like myself, for a *good long* whip,

> "To lash such scoundrels naked through the world!"

Does he not also recall (with feelings—oh, how oppo-

site!) the high-hearted wish of the Great Henry of France, that every one of his humblest subjects had as good a fowl in the pot, as that which was about to afford himself a dinner!

Talking of generosity, "and all that sort of thing," as the Duke of Norfolk says, reminds me of an instance that I lately met with in the D——shire newspapers. It may serve to illustrate the degenerate notions in such matters of the present times. A public subscription was set afoot for the purpose of raising a fund for the restoration of one of the principal churches in the county; and an application was made by the committee to a gentleman of fortune, whose family tombs of great antiquity occupied a prominent situation in the nave and other parts of the edifice. The estimated costs of repairing his ancestors' monuments were stated; and (to use the term employed in an ingenuous sense by the committee,) he "generously" contributed 50*l.* towards the required amount. Fie! oh, fie on 't! What! did this gentleman allow the public to pay one farthing towards the renovation of his forefathers' sepulchres? If he did, commend me to the decease of his honour, and let it be buried at the public expense! Generosity! — a rotten potato, or, to adopt what I hope will become a standing phrase, a "pinch of Norfolk curry," for all such degenerate descendants of an old and knightly stock!

CHAPTER III.

YEARNINGS FOR THE GOOD OLD PAST.

—I do love
These OLD REMEMBRANCES: they are to me
The heart's *best intercourse!*

L. E. L.

HEY for the wedding-cheer of the Highlands, at a day now past—the "barley-broth, or *cock-a-leekie,* boiled fowls, roasted ducks, joints of meat, sheeps'-heads, oat and barley-cakes, butter, and cheese, and, in summer, frothed butter-milk, and *slam!*" Oh, for the "venison, and all kinds of game, from the cap-percalich to the grouse,"—oh, for the savoury haunches of goats, and the roasted kids, that smoked so daintily on the board!—Ah, those good old wedding-customs, also, in Wales—the "Staralds" and the "Turmants," they are nearly forgotten. Fewer every day grow the "Bridewains" in Cumberland. The sack-posset, and the "Flinging the Stocking," are known no more at our weddings. No longer is heard the heart-stirring catch—

"Bid the lasses and lads to the merry brown bowl,
While rashers of bacon shall smoke on the coal:
Then Roger and Bridget, and Robin and Nan,
Hit 'em each on the *nose,* with the *hose,* if you can."

Where are there such tunes, now-a-days, as "Joy to the Bridegroom,"—"The Beginning of the World,"—and "My Wife shall have her Way?" Alas, too, for the goodly chants of the monks, in the holiday ceremonies! "Music," as old Fuller says, "sung its *own Dirge* at the Reformation." Alas, for the Hurling-Matches of yore; the carrying the "Holly-Tree," on Twelfth Night; the throwing at "*Jack-o'-Lents,*" on Ash Wednesday; the frumenty, and the cakes and ale, on *Mothering* Sunday; the Red Herring riding away on Horseback, in a corn-salad, on Easter Day; the kisses on Easter Monday; and the songs on Christmas Night! Pleasant it were, in the time of our youngest enthusiasm, to have danced till moonlight, with a joyous ring of pretty peasant-girls and their rustic mates, around some flower-encircled and gaily-ribanded May-pole, on "sweet" May Day. Ah, *Seigneur Dieu!* the earth then rolled on—

"In one continued round of harmony."

But it is all over now. People are grown too religious—too formal—too proud—or (too often, alas!) too care-worn to be happy. The frank, open-spirited, free-hearted customs of our sires cannot flourish in the cold artificial soil of the present. The world, I

speak it with sorrow, is going worse every hour that we live. *Mira temporis inclinatio!* Simplicity and homely manners are fled. A false refinement has spread its baneful influence over the cheery habits, the "gamesome delights," of once "merrie* old England." As Sir Ernest Oldworthy would say, in reference to the unauthorized innovations of the last three or four centuries,—"Every petty copyholder has now a chimney to his house, as well as his lord—formerly they had but flues, like louver-holes." A holland-jacket and linsey-woolsey petticoat were once thought good enough for the "Nans" and "Bridgets" of a farm-house,—now the "maidens of the villagery" are intent to "walk in silk attire," and are no longer christened with their grandmothers' names, but take the ear captive with the high-sounding appellations of "Matilda" and "Louisa." The very signs of our inns and public-houses have abandoned their old mirth-associated character. What scenes of cordial merriment recur to the mind's eye as we call up the written memories of former years,—as records of the favourite haunts of olden genius revive in our recollection! Honour be to the festive roof-trees of yore—to the old inns, and taverns, and club-rooms, fre-

* By-the-bye, as an antiquary, I must not lose sight of the fact, so little understood in general, that "merrie," an epithet so often occurring in connection with "old England," did not mean *cheerful, joyous, gay,* &c., but *famous;* being descended from the Anglo-Saxon word, mere, *excellent, illustrious.*



quented and immortalized by the wits and *savans* of the "days that are gone!" The reader, whose taste is less tinctured with the æruginous hues of antiquity than my own, may smile as I refer my benison to the "honest ale-houses" which once boasted the following euphonious and *marquant* denominations,—that is to wytte—The "Labour in Vain, or, the Devil in a Tub;" — the "Tumble-down Dick;" — the "Two Sneezing Cats;"—the "Four Winds;"—the "Cat and Bagpipes;"—the "Fox and Seven Stars;"—the "Bell and Neat's Tongue;"—the "Lamb and Dolphin;" the "Goose and Gridiron;"—the "Cock and Hoop;"—and the "Devil and Bag of Nails." Our present houses of public entertainment are all "Suns," and "Stars," and "Royal Hotels." The sign of the "Old Crooked Billet," or the "Three Mariners," would be reckoned vulgar. Nash's "Play in Praise of Red Herrings," would, at this day, scare the people from the very galleries. The ancient pleasures of the "Bear-garden" would be anything but a treat to the present 'prentices of "Chepe." They could not appreciate the delight with which an old writer describes the sport, telling us that "when the bear was lose, to shake his earz twyse or thryse wyth the blud and the slaver about his fiznamy, was a matter of a goodly releef!"

Ah, the *past* were the times! I am, thank God, no party-politician, and my spiritual views are equally free from polemical bias, and sectarian subserviency.

Marry, I am like the cuckoo of Gotham, not to be "hedged in" by the "wise men," "charm they ever so wisely." In truth, I have examined too minutely and critically, as a student, the differences of opinion that serve to agitate mankind in such matters, not to be convinced, that every antagonist-system, whether of faith or polity, which has yet been promulgated, has its full share of defects and errors; and that to steer clear of all prejudices of *clique*, and schisms of controversialists, supported, as they are, on either side, by the sophisticated argumentation of the schools, and of individuals, is the privilege of a rational and truth-loving mind. I say it, therefore, without reference to political or theological dogmata, that, so far as the laudable recreation of the people was concerned, the old Catholic religion set a good example. As an ardent lover of my country, I revere the memory of those days, when the ancient festivals of the Church were observed as general holidays. The health and spirits of the community were kept alive by such periodical seasons of enjoyment. They brought the rich and the poor together, carrying out the grand elemental law of society—*union*; as well as the broad fundamental principle of Christianity, BROTHERLY LOVE. I say it emphatically, the religion of the popes cherished and promoted these observances in a spirit of wise indulgence and paternal foresight. So far, then, be the religion of the popes honoured, and let us not be ashamed to follow the good example which

it has bequeathed to us. There is an old English proverb, and truly have we seen it, in no small degree, verified in our own day, "All work, and no play, makes Jack a dull boy." A duller set of boys than we islanders, at the present period of our history, it would be hard indeed to find. If it were not for the pitiful outcry of a section of the community about railroads (the promoters of a system of gambling and cheating, disgraceful to the spirit of the country, and calling loudly for the interference of the government—a government, by-the-bye, that would long ago have prevented the vile sale of empyrical drugs, had it cared a straw for the health and welfare of the people!) one would imagine that the public were asleep at all such intervals as found them released from their daily-accustomed labours. Oh, the heavy, vast, barbarous lubbers, that we meet with now-a-days; the little, lean, dejected wights; the sottish, dull, and leaden spirits; the hard and crabbed minds!

Ah, the *past* were the times! The "Cushion-Dance," at a country wake, and the old rural sport, called "Barley-Break," brought the lads and lasses together, in a right-exhilarated mood for enjoyment. There were no "Zion," "Salem," "Ebenezer," and "Mount Tabor" chapels then; no lank-jawed, groaning, methodists; no tub-teachers of religion; no saints that snuffle the gospel through their noses; a can of small beer for all such drivellers and snivellers! Then were poor-boxes to be seen, with suitable inscriptions

(such as "He who giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord," &c.), at all the great inns, as well as in the churches; and folks were content to drop their gift into them by stealth, giving the glory where due! Now, the trumpet must be blown in Zion, before the Pharisee will part with his pence. So charitable were people in those days (I am speaking of the times before the Reformation), that landlords and church-wardens, who kept the keys of those eleemosynary deposits, were seen to grow rich, as it were, by the very fructifying influence of their mere custody! Pho—pish! there is little worth living for now; and I often exclaim with *Hamlet*—

> "How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,
> Seem to me all the uses of this world!"

The exercise of novelty is over; we may say, in the words of *Macbeth*—

> "The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
> Is left this vault to brag of."

Marry, it were a pleasant thing to have been present at the first Frenchman's sight of English "rôsbif," and to have heard his cordial exclamations of "Charmant!" "Superbe!" "Magnifique!"

There is something bizarre in the very mistakes of the past, a thorough-paced style of blundering, that shews a genius even in error! Take, for example, the "Cosmography" of Peter Apianus, "expurgated from all faults," by Gemma Frisius, a physician and mathe-

matician of Louvain; which work represents Scotland as an island, of which York is one of the chief cities!

Yes — I say again, there are no times like those which are gone! O gemini! for a stool upon the stage of the "Globe," the "Hope," the "Swan," the "Rose," the "Red Bull," the "Phœnix," the "Fortune," the "Curtain," or the "Blackfriars" theatre, on some pleasant afternoon in summer, when the goodly comedy of "The Weakest goes to the Wall," or my old friend Robin Green's "Tu Quoque!" set the house in a roar! Oh, to have mingled with Shakspeare and his contemporaries, Sir Walter Raleigh, Beaumont, Fletcher, Selden, Donne, Cotton, Carew, and Martin, at the "Falcon," and the "Mermaid," and the "Devil" taverns. How vividly does Beaumont, in a poetical epistle to "rare old Ben," paint the delightful intercommunion of those lofty minds and gifted spirits!—

> — "What things have we seen
> Done at the Mermaid! heard words that have been
> So nimble and so full of subtle flame,
> As if that every one from whence they came
> Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
> And had resolved to live a fool the rest
> Of his dull life; then, where there hath been thrown
> Wit able enough to justify the town
> For three days past; wit that might warrant be
> For the whole city to talk foolishly."

Alas, where are now the "flashes of wit" that were

wont to "set the table in a roar?" "Ay, bel-amy,"—as old King Rufus used to say—"it were worth a whole life of these degenerate days, to have supped one evening with those real sons of Apollo, all glowing with the radiance of their divine descent—apostles truly inspired to propagate the great cause of wit and harmony—of brotherly love and soul-imparted recreation. Herrick thus elegantly addresses Ben Jonson on the subject of those convivial meetings:—

> "Ah, Ben!
> Say how, or when,
> Meet at those lyric feasts,
> Made at the Sun,
> The Dog, the Triple Tun?
> Where we such clusters had,
> As made us nobly wild, not mad;
> And yet each verse of thine
> Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine."

Should we not, too, have liked to have made in one the circle at "Will's," when the great Duke of Ormond, the Earls of Dorset and Rochester, Dryden, Davenant, Cowley, Waller, Sedley, Denham, Cibber, and other of the leading wits of the latter part of the seventeenth century, met nightly in debate? Or to have looked in, at a later day, when Pope, Swift, Bishop Berkeley, Gay, Arbuthnot, and the rest of that eminent set, kept up the banquet of mind, in the same consecrated region? Aha, for a tankard o' sherris, or a quart o'Canary, with our old acquaintance, Con-

greve, Vanbrugh, Wycherley, and Etherege; whose poignant wit, when free from the dross of that coarser humour, which was too apt to adhere to it, was a banquet for Phœbus himself! A "goodly releef" it is, in these days of foggy dulness, to indulge ourselves, even in the illusion of fancy, with a "drop in" at some London or Dublin coffee-house society, and discuss the merits of a pottle or two o' sack, or a flask of mine host's best claret, with honest George Farquhar; whose soul of fire was too early withdrawn from the sphere which it irradiated; and whose gleams of wit (alas for genius!) were too often overshadowed with the dark clouds of pecuniary distress. A few sneakers of orange-flower brandy at "Button's," with those genial and polished associates, Addison, Steele, Phillips, Carey, and others, were a thing to drive away the mists of these perpetual Novembers.

Ah, by Saint George and the Witch of Endor, I say it again and again, the past were the times! A peep into the "Mermaid" parlour of the "India Arms," at Deal, with our old boon-companion, the author of the "Fair Quaker of Deal; or, the Humours of the Navy," would have furnished food for many an after-hour's enjoyment. Hurrah, my souls, for a bucket of flip at the "Three Mariners," in the same good old town, in the blazing days of Blake! Ho, for a bumper of Barcelona, at the "Duke's Head," at Chelsea, or the "World's End," near Hyde Park, with some of old Marlborough's "Fire-eaters!"

Thanks from the heart be given to the very dullest writers of old plays and old novels; for even their worst performances abound with traits of the times in which they were written, and are the most valuable sources of the true knowledge of manners in the ages that are gone! They are all that we have left, as one of our contemporaries justly observes, "to inform us what were the true characters of our progenitors." As a patriot and an antiquary, I alike deplore the decline of the Drama. It was a great check on the levelling notions and Calvinistic *virus* of the day. The spirit that has turned so many of our theatres into Methodist chapels, reminds me of the ignorant barbarity of the earlier monks, who recklessly defaced the fine classical compositions of the ancients, to make room for their lying legends of saintly impostors, and other illiterate trash. Build we a temple in the spirit, in honour of such names as Shakspeare and Jonson! Give us the inspired utterances of a Beaumont and a Fletcher; the "fine madness" (as Drayton has beautifully termed it) of a Marlowe; the vivid conceptions and quaint language of a Davenant; the plaintive tenderness of an Otway; the chaste yet fervid eloquence of an Addison; the spirited outbursts of feeling of a Cumberland; the playful wit of a Garrick; the caustic humour of a Foote; and the brilliant sentiment and delicious tact of a Sheridan; and let those, who will, prefer the nauseous exhibitions of the conventicle! Let those, who will, honour the disciples

of Calvin and his rival in later times, Wesley! Let them enjoy the prolonged nasal whining—the hollow, tremulous, deep-drawn groaning — (fit expressions of the empty hypocrisy, or idiotic fanaticism, of the wretched performers!) — the loathsome cant — the spiritual gallimawfrey of ideas and language — the rant, the fustian, and the bombast, that would too frequently disgrace, in point of buffoonery, the lowest stage-booths of Bartlemy Fair, could the wildest days of its "Saturnalia," return to us!

Were our senators, indeed, to witness the scenes of monstrous absurdity and indecency, which are habitually enacted, on certain frequent occasions, in the Wesleyan Methodist chapels, in some of our remoter villages—tending, as they do, to throw an air of ridicule over the great and sublime truths of religion itself, in the minds of the less educated classes; I am persuaded that, if a spark of patriotism remained, they would endeavour to rescue a large body of their countrymen from the practice of such gross profanation. No kennel of hounds, at feeding-time, (and, as an old fox-hunter, I speak with due advisement,) could equal, in uproar and disturbance, the cries and howlings of mock worship, that proceed from these dens of folly. Nor are such scenes of burlesque profanity confined to our country villages. There was a congregation of the Arminian Methodists, or of some other sect occupying the "New Jerusalem Temple," some years ago at D——, whose

chapel was contiguous to the main street, and whose shouts and screams might at times be supposed to resemble rather the wailings and blasphemies of the damned, than aught of earthly origin. To the tempestuous nature of such orgies, the clamour of a prize-fight (and here, also, I "speak by the card") would be held "musical as is Apollo's lute." In passing daily (to and from Manchester) this temple of Chaös, the coachmen of the "Red Rover" and the "Peveril of the Peak" would habitually, by way of precaution, keep their teams close in hand, lest they should come in for an explosion of the more than Babel vociferation and tumult; yet more than once, I believe, in spite of their strongest efforts, the leaders bolted, swerved from the road, dragging the necessarily more confined wheelers after them, and had well nigh upset the equally-startled passengers,—so terrible were the deafening shouts of "C—t is with us!—Father! Father!—Glory! Glory!—Hallelujah!—Amen!" &c., &c. A worthy magistrate of the county, who was frequently my guest, used to condole with me on the vicinity of my residence to this Paradise of Fools, although the intervening distance approached in extent a quarter of a mile; and I, who cared little for the occasional disturbance, was wont to reply by suggesting the probability of an early removal of the sect to another chapel, whose situation was immediately opposite to his own mansion—a playful prophecy which, strangely enough, was at one time held

likely to be accomplished, if it was not, indeed, actually fulfilled; and my friend was, for aught I know, compelled to threaten proceedings, as for a breach of the peace, in the event of the oratorio of the Siege of Sion being further enacted. I say again, the theatres were a great check upon the *Mawworm* tribe; and if they had themselves kept free from a just imputation of encouraging immorality by the nature of the plays too often represented, their influence, on this ground as on others, might have been considered among the greatest of our national benefits.

I have some idea of translating Scribani's "Amphitheatrum Honoris adversus Calvinistas," as well as the same author's "Ars mentiendi Calvinistica." I think that they might do good service in exposing the masked devilry of the old Genevan spirit, which is now so extensively and insidiously at work amongst us.

But a truce for the present with Calvin, Wesley, Arminius, and Swedenborg, and with their respective admirers, several and general. A truce with Anabaptists, Ranters, Jumpers, and Thumpers. "Stercora stercus amet!"

CHAPTER IV.

MORE SIGHS FOR THE DAYS THAT ARE GONE.

MACD. I cannot but remember such things WERE,
And were *most precious.*
Macbeth, Act iv. sc. 3.

A GOODLY book to read is "The Pleasant Conceits of Old Hobson, the merry Londoner; full of humorous Discourses and merry Merriments." Formerly, nothing but "merry merriments" and jollity—sport, gaming, and singing, seem to have been thought of—

"Song and dance, and mirth and glee!"

Ha! Dieu le benie! Those were the days of real wisdom: people then *lived*, now they do but *exist*. If you go to a wedding, you find folks as stiff and as frumpish as if it was a funeral; whereas, in earlier times, as Richard Symons informs us, they pulled off each other's peruques and sat upon them, or threw them into the fire; and "threw about sack posset among all the ladyes to soyle their rich cloaths, which they tooke as a favour, and also wett sweetmeats; and daubed all the stooles where they were to sit with

wett sweetmeats." There was divertisement for you, gentle reader—there were "merry merriments." Alas, there are no such "pleasant conceits" in the programme of a modern wedding—no "humorous discourses" of "merry Londoners," worthy of a place with those of good old Hobson and honest Master Symons.

'Sfoot! now-a-days, be a woman ever so old or ugly, you cannot get her burned as a witch. "Those were brave days for young people," remarks De Foe, "when they could swear the old ones out of their lives, and get a woman hanged or burnt only for being a little too old—and, as a warning to all ancient persons, who should dare to live longer than the young ones think convenient." We *talk* of the love of our neighbours—our ancestors *practised* it, Witness, for instance, the witch-burnings we have just spoken of, which they looked upon as required by a regard for their neighbours' interest as well as their own; while the absence of a lot of ugly old hags—mar-sports and kill-joys as they were, might ask, perhaps, a less apology than this zeal for the public welfare. Yes—hang or drown all the *witches!* Charity and generosity died away, as poor-laws and the pride that despises poor relations came into fashion. The bonds of society, the ties that bound the high and the low together, in mutual respect and amity, are broken; the cheering sympathies of life are dissolved. Where are now the new year's gifts of well-lined gloves that were laid on my lord chancellor his table? Where

is the large mould candle sent by the chandler as a present to his customers at Christmas? where the raisins presented by the grocer to make a Christmas pudding? where the pack of cards that accompanied them, and which, in many a solitary parsonage, or remote farm-house, used to knock down the tedium of a long winter evening? where the yule-dough and paste images given by the baker? Oh, for the brawn, mustard, and malmsey of a Christmas day feast in the olden time! There is no 'shippe' of silver for an 'almes-dish,' at our modern banquets. Oh, for the display of 'holly, ivy, cypress, bays, laurel and mistletoe, and a bouncing Christmas log in the chimney!' Ah, there have been no good doings amongst us since the Christmas fare and pastimes were lost sight of—the yule, the furmety, and the caudle; the carol, the minstrelsie, and the evergreens! Where are the 'thrift-boxes,' as they were called, which the poor apprentices used to put up in their master's shop, and into which every well-disposed customer dropped his occasional mite, for the encouragement of that industry which is too apt to languish during the unrequited services of a long term of apprenticeship?

Pleasant—yes, very pleasant it is, to read or hear of the good old customs of our worthy and honoured ancestors, and to sigh, though vainly, for the ability to restore them! If it depended—as, alas! it does not—on myself, my rustic neighbours should join with heart and soul, as of yore, in the "Hagman Heigh" of New

Year's Eve. Hear its revivifying and right-jollifying chorus:—

> "To-night it is the new year's night, to-morrow is the day,
> We are come about for our right and for our *ray*,
> As we used to do in old King Harry's day:
> Sing, fellows, sing, *Hagman Heigh!*"

Let us ramble on a little further, and pick up a few more cheerful gleanings of the past! In other days, even Nature herself seemed to honour the great ones of the earth; and we seldom read, in our ancient chronicles, of a prince or other person of lofty estate, dying without some blazing star, or other phenomenon, heralding the event. Now, the Pope himself may "turn up his toes," and the heavens take no notice of the matter. (There was a dreadful tempest, by the bye, when George IV. died; but *that* was a very special case.) The great, in our times, seem to have lost that dignified self-observance which once drew around them so magic a circle of power. *Sangue di me!* Think of the old baronial towers of Arundel, that once environed many a mailed captive with their frowning vastness, being devoted by their present possessor to the less puissant and seigneurial purpose of *shutting up a couple of pigs, to see if they would live upon rotten potatoes!* We read in our early history of a mitred abbot having nearly a thousand men at his heels, when he passed beyond the gates of his convent—a custom which he adopted, not as a necessary security, but as a pageant that evidenced his

wealth and consequence. "Our most drad Soveraine Ladie Quene Elizabeth," "of most happie and glorious memorie," had cannon dragged after her, when she took the air. And what was the result?— Why, she "was of the people receyved marveylous entirely, as appeared from the assemblie, prayers, wishes, welcommings, cryes, tender woordes, and all other signes, which argue a wonderfull earnest love of most obedient subjectes towards theyr sovereigne." In short, the people knelt to her with their hearts, as well as with their knees, whenever she condescended to appear amongst them. Now, the fine old dignity of a Lord Abbot is blotted out of the English hierarchy; and sovereigns go by steam, like the meanest of their subjects! Alas, can it be wondered at, that, in these days, a throne is—to vulgar eyes, at least—"a mere chair, with gilt nails driven into it?" We read, also, that formerly, many thousands of persons daily dined at the tables of some Earl of Warwick, or other great noble. "*Ista res jam penitus obsolevit,*"— that custom is now quite out of doors. Now, alack, in numerous instances, we see the fact reversed; and many a pauper-peer subsists on the legally-enforced alms of the people! Who shall say that this is an improvement on the notions of our ancestors?

Ah, Jesû and sweet St. Mary! how times do fall off! Look at the surnames of Englishmen in the palmy days of chivalry, and compare them with those of this beggarly commercial period! Instead of the

stately patronymics of the De Mowbrays, the De Cliffords, the De Veres, the De Clares, the Nevils, the Mortimers, the Bohuns, the Plantagenets, and the Bigods, that decorated our early peerage, (names that seem to sparkle with the mailed gorgets and golden collars of SS., with which they were associated,) we may now read the coarse, trade-stinking, unmentionable appellations of—(in pity I forbear to write them in full!)—P—, J—, P—, T—, W—, B—, W—, and of a host of others, that impregnate the very air, whereon they are breathed, with the effluvia of sundry merchandizable articles, or matters whereof I am little disposed to have any cognizance, and the nature of which I can therefore scarcely specify. Then, take the fine old christian names most usually associated with the chivalric era,—Alured, Reginald, Hildebrand, Marmaduke, Lionel, Basil, Cecil, Bertram, Emericus, Grimbald, Launcelot, Maximilian, "with divers others of like sort," and contrast them with the same number of those now more generally in use; and, without caring to particularize the latter, what boot, my masters, would ye give in exchange? And so it is with the men themselves. Cast a single glance at the portraits of Vandyck—look, as long as you like, at the people you meet in the Parks, "the House," the Levee, or the Opera; and you will find that, with peaked beards and slashed doublets, went out the last, lingering spark of the ancient lamp of seigneurial and chivalresque dignity!

True, it may be said, that our new lights burn more steadily than the old; but do they cast those gleams of sunlike power — those broad, invigorating rays, that spread a magic halo around—a far-luminous atmosphere of majesty, that "seemed not of the earth?" Drop the curtain; the last act is played: come, we will not stay for the farce!

CHAPTER V.

A VISIT TO "OLD" NOTTINGHAM.

COR. A goodly city is this Antium.
Coriolanus, Act iv. sc. 4.

A merry place, 'tis said, *in days of yore*,
But something ails it NOW—the place is cursed.
WORDSWORTH.

We live under the matter of fact rule of *steam-engines* and *railways*, and THE HORSES are banished from the land!
MISS MITFORD, *in a letter to the Author.*

"THINGS are not as they were!" is a remark that often reaches my ear, and finds also a melancholy echo in my heart. As a bare proposition, however evident in the abstract, carries with it little force, unless it appeal to facts within the experience or knowledge of the receiver; and as facts acquire a greater weight in the recital, when serving to illustrate some given point in discourse, I shall mark out, for the argument of the present chapter, a few personal recollections, or recorded circumstances, that enhance the regret, which, as I have said, accompanies the suggestion above cited. To give a 'local habitation,' as well as a 'name,' to the instances which I am about to nar-

rate, in support of the thesis, I will take Nottingham, my native town, as the scene of our intended contemplations.

— "*Old* Nottingham, the land of Lud,
And lace and stockings, and good ale and wassail,
Bold hearts, and once, a venerable castle."

So sang the noble poet, Byron, who elsewhere addresses the same locality in terms which, as nearly as I can recollect, for I quote from a very distant impression of the passage, are the following:—

"*Old* Nottingham! thou fill'st an honoured page
In History's volume, but in crimson letters:
'Twas here misguided Charles threw down the gage
Before a nation shaking off its fetters;
'Twas here he fix'd his standard,—here the rage," &c., &c.



The continuation of the stanza has for the moment escaped me. But, to my narrative. It is now impossible to visit '*Old* Nottingham,' without a sickening memento, at every step, that it has become, in heart and soul, as well as in form and substance, another town; and must hereafter—at least, in the feelings of those who, like Byron and myself, knew it in earlier days,—surrender its once dear epithet of familiar use;—it is "*Old*" Nottingham no longer! And to how many of our finest towns, more particularly within the detestable sphere of the lace and cotton goods-manufactories, will not the same remark apply! The spacious, elegantly-constructed houses, that once witnessed the display of courtly festivity—

the residences of the nobility and gentry of the county, during the winter season, in the last century, and at a still later period inhabited by families of independent fortune connected with the aristocracy, have been long abandoned to the burgher-classes. To borrow an apt remark from the pages of a contemporary, in reference to the degraded state of the once aristocratic mansions of Dublin,—"In the halls which whilom were graced by 'noble knights and ladies fair,'—by high patrician lords and stately dames, you may now buy tape or bobbin at three yards a penny!" *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

Alas! thus it is in my native town! Apartments, still retaining something of the air of their former splendour,—halls and staircases, that once conducted the visitor to scenes of refined hospitality, and dignified as well as polished intercourse — to a communion of the high-born, the accomplished, and the learned—the gay, the gallant, and the beautiful, — exist but now as the shadowy emblems — the phantom-like memorials of departed prosperity, telling, in mournful phrase, of the "noble forms that are gone," and reminding us, with a deeply-solemn regret, of the plaintive lines of one of our sweetest modern poets:—

> "There is no glory left us now,
> Like the glory with the dead!"

Saddening reflections rise up at every step. It is as if every foot-fall awakened the echoes of a sepulchre.

The very day-light grows sick around us. Like the sprays of ivy o'ermantling some shadowy, long-shattered ruin, dark changes entwine their spell around the pillar of the past, and their memory strikes upon the heart with a solemn, knell-like sound — seeming to toll the funeral-signal of its decayed hopes, and sweetest, fondest anticipations! But I will make an effort, for the thousandth, or ten thousandth time, to drive away the darker visitants that would intrude upon my serener hours of converse with the past!

Look at that mansion of old respectability! Though still inhabited by a gentleman of some station, whose friendship I am happy to claim, it belonged, in the years of its better fortunes, to Thomas Lord Middleton, the right-hospitable representative of one of our fine old baronial families. The one near it, of more modest proportions and less commanding aspect, was the residence of the worthy Sir Gervase Clifton, the honoured descendant of the "Gervase the Gentle," mentioned in the quaint distich composed (so at least says tradition) by the "Maiden Queen," in her earlier days of high-spirited jocularity, — ere her brow grew pale with the succeeding struggles of a distempered spirit; ere she quailed (though surrounded by all the pomp, and power, and pride of her queenly station) before the spectral accusers which herself had raised, and "stooped her anointed head" to the dust, at the low whisper of penitential remorse! The reflections of melancholy, arising from such a contemplation of

the fallen victim of her own imperious passions, seem to cast a deeper shadow upon the object which suggested an allusion to the haughty sufferer; reminding us, yet more forcibly, at the same time, of the altered condition of its own destiny! In another quarter of the town stands, with a look of calm, patrician repose, the *ci devant* mansion of the Holles family, but belonging at the time to which I particularly allude, (the middle of the last century,) to the ancient family of Sherwin, from whom it passed, by purchase, to the writer's late father, whose large outlay in its restoration is spoken of by Blackner, in his History of the Town. Near this latter edifice appears the still stylish-looking residence of the late Baroness Santry — the widow, most honoured and pitied, of the unfortunate peer of that name, whose life was forfeited for the awful crime of murder; and a copy of whose will or codicil, somewhere in my possession, begins with a melancholy allusion to his own dejected position, — "I Barry Barry, *late Lord Baron Barry*, of Santry, in the kingdom of Ireland." The once stately castle, on the south-west of the town, exhibiting the ruins to which it was reduced by the barbarous torches of the rabble, on the occasion of the rejection of the Reform Bill by the Peers, in 1831, looks down (a very emblem of the mutability of human grandeur!) with a sad, accusing aspect, on the fractured heaps of masonry that bespeak the wreck of its former splendour; and seems to address the spectator of its fallen for-

tunes in the wailing voice of distressful misery. It tells, alas, like one of the villain Cromwell's trumpets in the civil strife of an earlier day, of the overthrow of patrician pomp and majesty, and of the degrading triumph of mob-domination! We will not pause upon the saddening picture; but proceed through the spacious market-place, and through the crowded yet unbusy streets; still directing our thoughts to the scenes of olden festivity that smiled within the walls of many of these now seemingly dejected and abased habitations.

I have heard my late father refer, as a matter of tradition, to the fact, that there were no less than *forty-two* close carriages kept within the town of Nottingham during the term of the winter-assemblies; for, in those days, the county-towns were so many provincial metropolises—the seats of pleasure and festive enjoyment of the most varied kind—miniature Baths or Montpeliers, without the nauseous necessity of drinking the boasted waters! Now, there are not, I am informed, more than *two* carriages of the description alluded to in the place—a circumstance which I have cited to shew the remarkable extent of the change which has passed over the face of society, since the extension of our mercantile and manufacturing relations.

But, to proceed with our picture of a past day. Many a blessing, not uttered, was due to the bad roads of the period, that kept the principal families,

like other people, within the limits of their own neighbourhood, except upon comparatively rare and important occasions. A hundred years ago, or thereabouts, "forty miles in fourteen hours was the pace at which *a prince* was forced to travel, and even then at the risk of frequent overturns, the coach propped up by the shoulders of the rustics, who were called in for the purpose of relieving the horses."

In those auspicious days shone forth the Provincial Drama in its highest lustre. The side-boxes of the Nottingham theatre were almost nightly graced by the presence of the Sedleys, the Stanhopes, the Digbys, the Pierreponts, the Willoughbys, the Nevilles, the Byrons, the Newdegates, the Parkynses, the Plumtres, the Chaworths, the Cliftons, the Sherwins, and by a very host of others, whose names, brightening, one by one, the shadow obscurity of the past, call up, nevertheless, with the memory of their former associations, sigh after sigh, as we reflect on the melancholy certainty, that the lustre of their once graceful patronage, and the smiles of their far-extended social influence, have been withdrawn for ever from the sphere which they so gloriously enlightened, and that a wide share of the pre-eminence and privileged character of their order itself, has sunk beneath the ruins of old times and customs, never, never to be recovered in this once happy, but now fast degenerating country!

There are at this moment lying before me the draughts of formal articles of agreement referring

to private horse-races at Nottingham, 'indented, had, made, concluded, and fully agreed upon' between the then Lord Byron 'of the one part,' and the Honourable Mr. Tracy, of Teddington, in Gloucestershire 'of the other part;'—documents that loudly attest the high social feeling and hilarious spirit that characterized the meetings of the aristocracy in the days to which I allude. At the present time, even the annual public races find their almost sole patrician support in the spirited and patriotic patronage of the Earl of Chesterfield, who presents a hundred a-year to the funds, in addition to the sums otherwise contributed as an ordinary subscriber. His lordship's name, as one of the stewards of the present year, is justly referred to, by a recent local print, as 'a tower of strength' secured to the cause; so great is the popularity of this benevolent and accomplished nobleman. I am old enough to recollect the days when these festive meetings were still supported by the rank and fashion of the surrounding counties; when the Dukes of Rutland, Portland, Norfolk and Newcastle, in a word the whole nobility of the neighbourhood,—vied with each other in the brilliancy of their equipages, in the profuse liberality of their expenditure, and in the unlimited extent of their high social influence, to support the *éclat* of the occasion; while the Sedleys and the Harpurs, the Parkynses and the Cliftons, with a long line of kindred associates devoted to the sports of the turf, added the crowning

example of their enthusiastic efforts to render 'Old' Nottingham the successful rival of Newmarket.

But, to return for a few short moments to the somewhat earlier period before spoken of. Then was the love of neighbourhood and of *home*-centered conviviality—that great prop of patriotic zeal, promoted and strengthened. Then were alliances maintained in families on a principle more generally accordant with the dignity of ancient descent. Then did trade reap its best reward in the steady home-demand that lay at its very doors. Then did splendour of mien, and homeliness of manners, stand out in striking relief, and add a more *piquant* aspect to the character of public intercourse, as diversifying and contrasting the traits of external modes and forms of behaviour.

I will not trust myself on the subject of the modern condition of this and other places where mushroom wealth, and an attendant species of mock gentility, are hourly defacing the pleasurable impressions, and still brighter traditions of the olden time.

Farewell, 'New' Nottingham! 'Things are not as they were!'

> Omnia mutantur; nihil interit—
>
> *　*　*　*　*
>
> Nec manet ut fuerat, nec formas servat easdem.
>
> OVID.

CHAPTER VI.

L. S. D.

APEM. Art thou a merchant?
MER. Ay, Apemantus.
APEM. Traffic confound thee, if the gods will not!
MER. If traffic do it, the gods do it.
APEM. *Traffic* is thy GOD, and thy GOD confound thee!
Timon of Athens, Act i. sc. 1.

THE vulgarly-associated letters, £ *s.* *d.*, have a freezing and repulsive aspect to the mentally-gifted and enthusiastic lover of the visions of the past. They are connected with the downfal of chivalry, and with the decay of all those fine old usages that gave spirit and interest, romantic and picturesque association, to the lives of our venerable forefathers. They are the agents of a conspiracy, that is daily and hourly carrying on in this country, to install plebeian arrogance in the canopied seat of the noble; to place the axe-bearer in the chair of the magistrate; and to confound, in one vile, confused disorder and rabble-rout, all the cherished distinctions of ancient rank, influence, and authority. They are the strange, uncouth powers, I repeat, that put the peasant of yesterday on a social

grade with his quondam liege—the hereditary seignior of a domain derived from the Conquest. They break down, with a gigantic and irresistible force, all the nicely-graduated steps of long-recognised dignity and pre-eminence; and will in time rule paramount over every thing that is noble, elevated, spiritual, and refined. The lord of estates enjoyed as "banner-land" in the days of Crecy, now drives into his county-town, where his forefathers were regarded as the very gods of the soil, and he finds his equipage—nay, his position and weight, eclipsed by those of some upstart merchant, banker, or manufacturer, whose father, or grandfather (if not himself), probably but a few short years before stood as a menial drudge behind the velvet escutcheoned chairs of his own family-circle. His ancient and time-honoured name is justled out of the grand jury, or the commission of the peace, by the introduction of others, whose proximity in such a panel, or array, as published in the reports of the assizes and quarter-sessions, or other public forms of notification, would be considered a contamination of his revered patronymic. Is it possible? Gods! is it possible—that he sees graziers and brewers, corn-merchants and bankers, coal-owners and iron-masters, recognised as the fit representatives of royalty? Ay, thrust into the chair of the High Sheriff, and the *once* distinguished seat of the Justice of Peace?—But are there not honorable stations to which he may yet aspire—points of elevation still unreached by the

threatening tide of democratic encroachment? Are not the sacred functions of a senator open to his privileged ambition? Alas! even in the halls of legislature—the noblest and most august arena of political power, the yellow, cunning-looking face of Mammon still glours upon the rightful scion of aristocracy. Yes, "dealers and chapmen," and "such small deer," —a very mob of *gentlemen-artisans*, with the smoke of Birmingham, Leeds, or Manchester yet wreathing around their new gilt buttons, there confront him under the style of "honorable" (and they might, so far as any truth is concerned in the description, as well be termed "learned" and "gallant") members. But the House of Peers (and with his wide seigniories and Norman pedigree, he might haply aspire to such a height of distinction), ay, that is, and must be, a sanctuary, where the golden dust of traffic can never be allowed to profane the hereditary seats of ermined nobility. Vain, delusive imagination!

Wake up, my visionary friend; you are dreaming of the days of the De Veres and the Cliffords, the Warrens and the Bohuns. Look around you, and tell me whom you see collected, on yonder benches, in palmy equality with the noblest representatives of the "barons of England, that fight for the crown." "Begar! here's Monsieur Tonson come again!" Hah! my little yellow-faced friend with the gilt buttons! It is even too true. Thanks to the facilities opened by a share in the ministerial functions, and by other indi-

rect means, the robes of patrician dignity have fallen, in these degenerate times, on the shoulders of those who had as leeve be whipped by the parish beadle, as see their pedigrees set forth in good old Saxon English. We will not venture to take a peep at the smaller circle to whom are entrusted the executive powers of our imperial government. A whispered presentiment—a something like the "pricking of my thumbs" felt by one of the witches in "Macbeth," deters me.

Return we to the provinces! The race-course is almost abandoned as a place of recreative resort; for there, too, the bloated capitalist of yesterday's growth has hung out his cotton or fustian flag of defiance. The stage-box of a country theatre, once limited to the use of the principal neighbouring families, is now open to the very journeyman-hairdresser who can muster his admission-fee. All is innovation and disturbance. Society is turned heels upwards. Base assumption is the order of the day; "DOWN WITH THE PRIVILEGES OF OLD!" the motto of the age. Why, the very coat-of-arms of a man's family may now be usurped and polluted by the very scum of the earth, without the possibility of prevention or redress. Vile, beggarly upstarts, gorged with the vulgar gains of commerce, or clothed in the petty distinctions of municipal rank, can now-a-days, under pretext of a similarity of surname, claim descent with the most honourable. The authenticated records and official regulations of the

Heralds' College are set at nought. The spurious pretensions of these Jack-o'-Groats are paraded, day by day, in the eyes of those who are nearly as ignorant as themselves, till they acquire a sort of local currency, and are often foisted, with base temerity, upon those whose contempt is unfortunately unarmed with the power of resenting the outrage.

Such infringements on the gentilitial distinctions of our more ancient families, are of ordinary occurrence. Shades of Agincourt! will it be believed that I have lately seen, on one of the bobbins of thread issued from the factory of a wealthy M. P. and J. P., the crest of an old and illustrious Welsh family, whose name happened to be identical with that of this aspiring and unscrupulous *parvenu?* On the carriage of another opulent manufacturer, in the same neighbourhood, who is also—

" A Parliament member, a justice of Peace,"

may be witnessed the armorial insignia of a peer of the realm, who is also the bearer of an accidentally-similar appellation. I need scarcely add, that both of these " *terræ filii* "—these aspiring nobodies, act a deliberate lie, in pretending to the ownership of the ancient arms in question. Such impudence is almost laughable, but for its atrocity. The villanous smoke-dried thieves! Saint Peter with his sword destroy them! These fellows would not hesitate to send a poor devil to prison for robbing a hen-roost, while they more meanly filch the most cherished possession of a

noble birthright — the "*gentilitia indicia*" of a long-descended ancestry. Yearn we in our hearts for the days, when kings, heralds, and pursuivants at arms made their periodical visitations into every county, supported by the authority of the government (a practice which subsisted till the reign of William the Third), and, besides rectifying all abuses of coat-armour, and falsifications of descent, summoned all such parties as they deemed qualified, to take out arms; or otherwise to sign a declaration, publicly attested, that they renounced all claim to be considered as gentlemen, and deemed themselves unworthy to associate with such. In those days, the gutter-blooded peasantly sons of — unhappy mothers, were content with their bags of vulgar coin, and the inner-side of their shop-counters. In these latter times, (I blush to the cheek-bone, while I write the fact,) we have seen the grandson of a Dublin b—r, (a Whig-radical, as he ought to be!) seated in the *bureau* of the prime minister!!! Need we wonder, therefore, that the various classes of society are so "promiscuously" blended together! "Woe to the prosperity of a country like our own," says Sir Egerton Brydges (I do not quote his exact words, but the sentiment is the same), "when men of low ancestry are appointed to guide its councils!"

To shew how pointedly the differences of rank were distinguished in the last century, I may instance the fact which follows. Mrs. B—, of D—, presided for

eleven successive years as sole Lady Patroness of the D—shire county assemblies, and on resigning that office to the Countess of F—, in 1752, made the following entry in the account book:—"August 4th. Delivered up the Assembly-room to the Right Honourable the Countess of F—, who did me the great honour of accepting it. I told her that Trade never mixed with us Ladys. A— B—."

Alas! could her majestic shade return to the scene of her former supremacy, and behold the thread-spinners, with their bobbins and spindles in their very visages, exchanging glances of familiar recognition (!) with 'gentlemen in blood and lineaments,' the distinguished successors of her own 'men of name and noble estimation,' she would exclaim with *Norfolk* (not our 'Pig-feeding duke,' but the princely cotemporary of Richard II.),

"A trespass that doth vex my grieved soul!"

The '*procul, ô, procul este, profani!*' of our old friend Ovidius Naso, rises to my lips, whenever I enter these strange, heterogeneous assemblies. The mingling of the 'clean' with the 'unclean' beasts, in old Noah's ark,—the bringing together (I quote from memory) 'of every living thing of all flesh,' and 'of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth,' seems newly verified.

Breathe we a devout sigh for the worthier times, when sumptuary laws were in force; and chandlers' and cheesemongers' wives and daughters sought not

to dazzle with the display of satins and velvets, and ostrich feathers, as they now do, in violation of every principle of decency, and sense of common shame! God of his mercy! what ridiculous shows have we now-a-days in the streets, (and the evil is not confined to our towns, but extends equally to the remotest country villages!) of vulgarity and finery blended together! What nondescript specimens of bedeviled humanity move our laughter!—creatures, whose incongruous admixture of opposite characteristics often reminds my antiquarian eye of the fabulous monsters exhibited in Gothic sculpture! Hands, that bear the unmistakable tint of brick-dust, pretend (*ou, diable!*) to the use of the delicately-hued French kid glove. Necks that vie in tincture with the sallow superficies of bread-and-butter, aspire to the costly cincture of oriental pearls! Hose of finest silk envelop legs that mock the proportions of an Irish chairman's; while satin parasols are expanded to protect faces that might with the most natural effort, look the sun out of countenance! What rare sport would our old friend, Robin Goodfellow, have made of these 'home-spun wights' and 'base mechanicals,' thus seeking, like the daw in the fable, to deck themselves with the plumes that belong to others. Bravissimamente! How would he have clapped his elfin hands, and rejoicingly cried:—

> "And those things do best please me
> That befall *preposterously!*"

To heighten the joke, too, these are the very people

who would strip the ancient judges of the land of their robes of dignity, as foolish marks of distinction —the relics of a barbarous state of society! The venerable, gravity-beseeming wig of the judicial Nestor appears, in the eyes of these mob-reformers as a sort of comic attempt at a scarecrow! And let us not forget that *these* are the people who are daily and hourly, with *stealthy* movement, acquiring an *usurped* position of eminence in the social scale, with an attendant authority, which, unless vigorously checked, may too soon bear down in one overwhelming tide, all the long-constituted and time-honoured distinctions of the upper and justly-privileged classes. Should we be called upon to bid farewell to Minever, we may say at the same time, 'Look to it, Ermine!'

I do not know whether it strikes others, as well as myself, but I never enter a town of trading character, without feeling that its various sites of old historical interest, its public institutions, and other objects of note, are deprived of much of their fair importance, by being associated, in point of conservation, with a resident authority composed of the inferior orders of the state; instead of reckoning amongst their *custodiers*, as on the continent, nobles and chivalric personages, whose high, individual distinction seems more nearly allied to the exercise of functions of this public nature. Why should not our nobility and great men think it equally worth their while to preside over the affairs of cities and towns, as well as those of counties?

And why do they not endeavour to keep up the dignity of their county-towns, by making them more frequently the scene of festive resort? They would thus conciliate, or awe down, that spirit of rising jealousy, which, backed by the possession of suddenly-acquired wealth, is seeking to disturb—nay, to destroy, the very existence of the aristocratic order. A late speech of Mr. Bright, M.P., one of the anti-corn-law agitators, plainly announces the feelings of his class towards the peerage of our country. I fear—I fear, that this is the distant muttering of a tempest that may yet pass over us. Assuredly, these '*homines novi*'—these aspiring nobodies—the strongest, because the richest, champions that have ever represented the democratic class in this England of ours, will painfully brook the higher assumption of the patrician grade; and they will desire the destruction of those distinctions which it is beyond the privilege of mere wealth (save in a few special cases of indirect influence) to obtain. Mr. Thomas Carlyle's sneers at what he chooses to call '*cloth*-worship'—his laudation of the villanous traitor, Oliver Cromwell, whom he is pleased to exalt into a fit subject for 'HERO-worship,' and the cordial acquiescence with which these and similar indications of mob-sympathy have been received by a large portion of the public press, point out to those who 'have made history their pillow-mate,' much to be apprehended. and diligently guarded against, *while yet the means of resistance are available.* I think that it was Mr. Can-

ning who said, with deep regret, that he foresaw the time was fast approaching when this country would be governed, like France at her revolutionary period, by what he might not inaptly call '*The Spirit of* JOURNALISM!' The prophecy has been largely realised—the results are yet to follow. But it may be depended upon, as a general principle, that there is no tyranny like democracy—no slavery like that of being subject to men who have trampled on their own legitimate subordination. Heaven defend us from such heroes as Cromwell, and from such hero-worshippers as Carlyle! (7)

CHAPTER VII.

THE CLAIMS OF ANCIENT GENTILITY, *adversus* THE LEVELLING DOCTRINES OF THE DAY.

Odi *profanum vulgus*, et arceo.

HORACE.

"God be wid *them times*," said Paul, "they warn't like NOW; the ould sort o' gintlemen for me."

Popular Tales and Legends of the Irish Peasantry.

I HAVE a great reverence for all who worthily support the census of an old gentilitial family. As respects the claims of ancient descent I am a very German, and could no more write fifty pages without allusion to the pedigrees of the people I spoke about, than I could read five lines of any author who treated irreverently, or without sufficient deference, the 'glorie of generositie,' as our old heraldic writers somewhat quaintly designate the blazon of gentry. The German blood which I in fact inherit in the female line, may afford the best excuse for the propensity in question. I am of course aware that there is a very numerous set of persons who affect to sneer at the accidents of birth or connection; and whose habit it is to speak disparagingly of the claims

of long descent and aristocratic alliances: but I have always found occasion to observe that such philosophical deriders of the honours of an ancient pedigree, universally consist of those individuals who cannot themselves assert any right to hereditary privileges or distinctions. The old fable of 'The Fox and the Grapes' may well be applied, therefore, in all such cases. Personal merit, when combined with the honours of ancestry, and with a distinguished position in society, is, even in the opinion of so rigid a moralist as Dr. Johnson, entitled to higher respect and applause than when unaccompanied by the splendour of elevated rank. And most deservedly is such higher estimation conceded in favour of those who have resisted the customary allurements to a life of ease and selfish gratification, and obeyed the noble dictates of a zeal for the welfare of others—thus preferring

"To spurn at low delights, and live laborious days."

To these remarks must be added the necessary acknowledgment, that the pride of birth, or the boast of patrician connections, is often rendered contemptible by its possessor's neglect of those accomplishments and principles of conduct which ought to be regarded as the inalienable incidents to such a condition; and by his seeming dependence on the merits of his ancestors, as a sufficient passport to distinction, without any reference to the recommendations of personal desert. Like Sir John Suckling, I pity the man that

can only boast of a long pedigree. In cases of this kind, all pretensions to superiority, in point of hereditary dignity, are so many indications of the owner's base unworthiness, or ignorant misapprehension of the responsibility of his position; and the exhibitors of such traits of mean degeneracy deserve to be treated in accordance with their own derogatory abatement of an otherwise valid claim to a higher degree of social estimation and respect. I may here repeat the substance of a dialogue that occurred between an acquaintance and myself, during the last visit I paid to one of those large manufacturing towns, wherein the levelling doctrines of the age find, naturally enough, their strongest supporters.

"I hear you speak," said the party referred to, "of such an one being descended from a *very ancient* family, and I scarcely understand, sir, how one family can really be more ancient than another; since we are told, in Sacred Writ, that the whole of mankind are sprung from the same original. Will you be good enough, therefore, to explain what appears irreconcilable with so solemnly authenticated, and apparently certain a fact?"

"My good, sir," I replied, "when I use the words '*very ancient family*' in the sense to which you allude, I speak of a race of persons who have, at a distant period, received from the sovereign, or other lawful authority, certain marks of distinction, that elevate them in the scale of political and social pre-

cedency; and do not refer to their possession of a longer course of descent, at the hands of Nature, than their neighbours. Thus, according to the institutions of the country in which we live, a grant of armorial bearings confers the attribute of *gentility* on the receiver and his descendants; who are thenceforth entitled to a certain rank above the ordinary bulk of society—becoming, as it were, a *gens*, or family of note. Hence we use the conventional expressions—'They are *genteel* people' (i. e. gentile—belonging to a *gens*). 'They are people *of family*.' Before such grant of arms, the members of any particular race have no existence whatever, *as a family*, in the estimation of those who derive their feelings and opinions from the ancient code of chivalry. Such people, in short, were never heard of within the walls of the Heralds' College. Every courtier will tell you, that they must be content to be confounded with the *bourgeoisie* and the *canaille*—the mob—the rabble—the *plebs*, or, as an old writer calls them, the 'promiscuous vulgar.' The words, '*our* family' from *their* lips would be sneered at as ridiculously absurd, *their* family being, as we have seen, a *non ens*, or a *nemo scit*, in the consideration of the *gentes*, or people of note and condition. Individuals of the race spoken of may, however, derive a *personal* claim to gentility from certain offices, vocations, or professions, which they may respectively exercise; and such *personal* rank gives them an inchoate right to demand a

grant of coat-armour, on payment of the regulated fees; but if they fail to prosecute that right, the gentility enjoyed by such individuals is of that transient nature that it *dies* with the *person*, and it will remain for their descendants, if similarly entitled, to procure their subsequent establishment as a *gens*, or family, and thus escape from the 'promiscuous' ranks of the vulgar, so emphatically alluded to in the following line of the Latin poet:—

'*Ignota* capita; numerus, *sine nomine* turba!'

The grant of a coat-of-arms constituting, therefore, a valuable distinction—a mark by which certain parties are hereditarily to be recognized as superior in rank to the general body of the people, it necessarily follows, that any usurpation of that privilege by others, is an offence, both in politics and morals, which deserves, and should always meet with, a ready exposure and punishment. There are four several qualities or degrees of gentility, arising from the grant of coat-armour. One who inherits a coat-of-arms from his father, is styled a gentleman of birth; if he derives it from his grandfather, he is termed a gentleman of blood; and if he succeeds to the same from his great-grandfather, or other more distant progenitor, he is entitled a gentleman of ancestry. If he obtains the grant himself, he is simply a gentleman of coat-armour. From these facts it is readily seen that, when once a family is created by a grant of heraldic honours, it obtains, at every remove from the founder, an added

dignity in the scale of descent, and an acknowledged precedency of worth and estimation, as compared with others of later origin. The admirers of ancient blood look with comparatively little respect on arms granted at a period subsequent to the reigns of the Tudors, and venerate, with an almost superstitious regard, the possessors of arms deduced from the era of the Plantagenets. There are still certain appointments connected with the Court, which can only be filled by gentlemen of ancient families; and it is much to be regretted that the good and wise regulation which excluded from the profession of the Bar all but gentlemen of four descents of coat-armour, was ever rescinded. There is now no walk of life, wherein a man can make sure of good company on the road. All are aspiring to see their descendants enrolled among the higher grades of society. Is a man a carpenter? his son must be a counsellor! A tailor? he must see his offspring in the pulpit! A publican, or a cobler? still his issue must be an M. D.; or add the decoration of his name (Scroggs or Hodges) to the Navy or Army List!"

"But are the morals or accomplishments of these people," inquired my friend, "necessarily inferior to those of a 'higher grade,' and are such lowly-born, or, as your courtiers might say, 'unborn' persons [here a sedate smile at his own witticism,] less likely to make valuable members of the professions which they aspire to exercise?"

"Possibly not," answered I: "although I conceive that there can be no higher spur to honourable exertion, than the conscious descent from a distinguished line of ancestors. The man so privileged, feels, or ought to feel, a weight of responsibility urging him to maintain the elevated station in which Providence had chosen to place him at his birth; and, supposing that he is at the same time without personal fortune, he has all the additional inducements which would render the man of inferior condition an energetic and successful opponent."

"Yet we frequently find, sir," observed my worthy acquaintance, "the man of 'inferior condition' rising to the highest honours of his profession; and this circumstance seems to shew that Providence did not mean that a man who was born the son of a tailor or a publican, should necessarily handle the goose, or chalk scores on the tally-board of a victualler. I apprehend, then, that it is for the advantage of the *genteel professions*, [here a slight bow of good-natured irony,] when men of conduct and talent, however mean their extraction, aspire to become their chief ornaments."

"Most undoubtedly so," was my immediate reply, "if there were need of them; but, till I am convinced that the qualities necessary for success and reputation in the professions, do not, at least, equally reside amongst a higher class of men, I shall hesitate to admit the social expediency of a rush from the baser orders of the community, at the situations to which

men of family seem the more legitimately entitled. The admission of a lower class of candidates is calculated to disgust and weaken the emulation of the man of birth; who, mindful of the saying of Alexander the Great, that he would have kings for the companions of his strife, in the Olympic Games, may fairly claim, in his own degree, that the associates of his professional career shall be those who are actuated by the same principles, sensibilities, and conventional rules of breeding, as himself. What, indeed, says one of my favourite authors, Sesellius? 'Quoniam et commodiore utuntur conditione, et honestiore loco nati, jam inde á parvulis, ad morum civilitatem educati sunt, et assuefacti.' To suppose that qualifications, or sympathies of this nature, are vested, in the ordinary course of events, in the man who claims paternity and training from some low and illiterate member of society, is to wander further from the bounds of probability than I am willing to accompany you. But, perhaps, it will be said that these are points affecting the manners and personal habits only, and not essential, therefore, to the requisite and more ordinary claims of a practical fitness for the functions in question. Admitting this part of the argument, and throwing aside all impressions of the τὸ καλον, or what you might be pleased to call mere considerations of taste, let us address ourselves to the very obvious question, whether experience does not shew the fact, that, where one of these men of the people succeeds

in securing a highly-reputable standing in the sphere thus intruded upon, a host of others do not too soon learn, with a double share of humiliation, that their occupation has been ill-chosen; and that they would have been healthier, wealthier, and wiser members of the community, if, like their brethren and kindred, they had addressed themselves to an humbler, but more congenial course of employment! Let us allow that it is laudable in a parent to entertain the most favourable designs for his offspring's advantage; and that a high and generous feeling is often seen to originate the scheme of ambitious advancement on the latter's behalf! But, in how many, if not in a wide majority of cases, shall we find that the motive is connected with a selfish, petty, contemptible affectation, springing from the possession of a little money — an insolent disregard for the opinions of others: and an arrogant, overweening desire of the individual to put his own indecent clownishness on a fancied level with the higher habits of life, and the superior refinement, of his more respectable and well-informed neighbours? Taking this view of a practice which, in these days of promiscuous affluence, I see gaining ground, and spreading its contagion downwards, into the very lowest depths of society, I shall continue, so far as individual influence extends, to oppose the weight of my opinion against all such vulgar, pitiful, and base innovation.

" No one, I am persuaded, entertains a warmer

sympathy for the legitimate claims of the humbler classes than myself. I honour and respect, and it will ever be my pride to cherish and aid the man who, content with the station in which he is born, and desirous only to discharge its duties with credit, has a proper share of deference towards those whom it has pleased an infinitely-wise Providence to endow with a larger measure of worldly means and authority; and who does not flee to the conventicle, as to a spiritual dram-shop, to become intoxicated with false ideas of the equality of the social condition. *Shade of the Seventh Harry!* when I hear of a grocer, or other petty shopkeeper, designing to introduce one of his sons as a candidate for the honours of the Bar, my blood boils with contempt and indignation at the drunken-headed presumption of the wretch! For a moment my heart seems stifled with the sudden recoil of blood, occasioned by the shock. What, in the name of Beëlzebub, the god of *dung!* a fellow, whom I should consider mad enough for St. Luke's, if he indulged the bare idea of being allowed a momentary seat, without express sanction, in the presence of a member of that dignified (or *once* dignified) profession, actually conceiving, behind his dirty counter, the unimaginably-preposterous and insulting notion of causing the forensic wig to be placed on the uncouth poll of one of his unmannerly progeny! The very suggestion seems to open an inner and further depth of transcendent lunacy—an erration of the bewildered

intellect, so widely distancing in extravagance the fiercest ebullitions in the ordinary hot fits of insanity —a disorder of ideas and sentiments so grotesque, unnatural, and wild, that one would think that society was madder still, could it look with a moment's complacency on the performance of such 'fantastic tricks' before 'high Heaven,' and not interpose its restraint on the unhappy objects of a delusion so absurd. Yet, (*mirabile dictû!*) we almost daily see these travesties exhibited, and they are scarcely viewed as remarkable! Neither pity, indignation, nor contempt, is expressed by the public, or by the profession thus signally outraged! And what is the consequence, as respects the latter? Look at the Bar, as it stood in the days of the Tudors! Trace, in a thousand diversified instances, the deference and respect with which its individual members were treated by the great! Take notice of the lengthened course of preparation that was adjudged necessary for candidates—the exercises and disputations to be gone through—the previous extent of classical acquirement held necessary; and connect with the amount of accomplishment thus inferrible, the high polish of manners gained by contact from birth with the best society, and you will witness a noble branch of the professional life of our social system in its becoming state of dignity and prosperity! Look, on the other hand, at the present picture, and behold the eating of a certain number of dinners in the hall of an Inn of Court; the payment of a certain

small amount in the nature of *caution-money;* and the procuring one or two *pro formâ* testimonials, as all that is necessary, save the discharge of stamp-duty and a few fees, to complete the initiation, and, in due time, the admission, of the candidate! The coveted wig descends on brains that have not yet, it may be, passed through the difficulties of an elementary acquaintance with law or grammar! The paternal ambition is satisfied. Thenceforth, the happy parent weighs his figs with a condescending air, quits his counter to hold conversation, when permitted, with his chief customers, and reflects not that, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, such false pretension is avenged by insulted Destiny with the total overthrow of all prospective advantage, and permanency of credit. I allude, in the ONE excepted instance, to the natural gift of consummate ability, (whose traits are sufficiently easy of discovery!) which can alone plead a rational and valid excuse for the breach of conventional notions of propriety, in the adoption of a mode of life so widely differing from the habits of early intercourse, and previous training. And even in a case like *this*, where the most brilliant success is the result, the damage ensuing to society through the vague pretensions encouraged by such an insulated attainment of eminence, in the minds of less gifted and less soberly-calculating individuals, is so extensive, as to justify, on patriotic grounds, the desire which I have before expressed."

"Would you propose, then," interrogated my friend, "that people of a lower grade should be always chained to the same station of life? If so, I conceive that the result of such a system would be to paralyse industry, and debase the moral qualities most efficacious to the welfare of society. Besides, as the great bulk of those now holding an elevated position have sprung from originals sufficiently humble,—or as, to use a popular saying, 'Every body was once nobody!'—such a measure would be as unjust in its principle, as impolitic in its application."

"'*Festina lentè!*' my good sir," answered I; "fairly and softly; 'make no more haste than good speed!' You advance too hastily to conclusions, and in the true 'hop, skip, and a jump' mood of the times we live in, are content to catch at random something like my supposed meaning, by way of avoiding the pains or difficulty of gathering a more substantial notion of the bearings of the subject which we are endeavouring to discuss. And, by-the-bye, the old classical adage, which I have just quoted, conveys the very injunction that I would place under the consideration of those who would see their families suddenly raised (*per saltum*, or at a jump) from a vulgar or obscure station to a sphere of life more reputable or distinguished. Let them be content to achieve this elevation by decent and suitable means—namely, by advancing *gradatim*, step by step, generation by generation, fairly and honourably, to the object of their

ambition! In the meantime, let every child of the same household be bred up to such similar employments as are conducive to the maintenance of that brotherly union and harmony of intercourse which Nature, *the great parent*, designed at their birth! At the present moment, we see one son (the offspring of some petty tradesman) condemned to the mean drudgery of carpentry or smiths'-work; while a second plies the scarcely more estimable labours of a plumber and glazier; but a third (as the father's fortunes rise) comes out a smug, smirking, 'booing,' speechifying attorney-at-law—'all *wriggle* and *twist!*'—to use a coarse but sufficiently expressive phrase, of modern adoption. A fourth, it may be, is canted into the church, and deafens and wearies an intelligent auditory, Sunday after Sunday, for the rest of his atrocious life; (and whom may Heaven in its mercy confound!) while a fifth, more ambitious still (who, if ever man was *born* for a particular calling, was destined by Providence for the hammer of an auctioneer), dons the forensic wig, attends the county and borough sessions, scrapes an acquaintance with one or two of the less considerable members of the magistracy (green-frocked esquires, whose broad red village-faces betray their owners' descent, at no distant period, from an honest, yeomanly, bacon-fed original!), and, the springs of his natural volubility being better oiled by the habit of his profession, which, as the negro would say, is all '*talkee, talkee*,' he outprates the parson, strikes dumb the at-

torney-at-law, with his solicitorship to boot; swaggers, in every dark, smoky corner of old resort—to which, by the ties of a kind of natural necessity, he is still bound—of his vast familiarity with the judges and serjeants-at-law, the attorneys and solicitors-general, or with the peers and magistrates, of leading distinction, that 'are more particularly his friends;' and even claims some sort of not very distant acquaintance, perdie! with the Lord Chancellor himself! He sits down to meals at the parent board, in the little back-parlour communicating with the shop, and screened by a green curtain from the observation of customers (this is generally during what is called the long vacation, though to him all vacations are of equal length); he is too glad of free-commons to stand upon the less important scruples of punctilio, and therefore makes the best of the moderate notions of refinement that exist in the paternal establishment. Well, he cuts or attempts to cut jokes with his brother the glazier (the cleverer man of the two!); *talks down* to the poor smith (a heavy soul indeed!); and keeps the attorney-at-law and solicitor aforesaid at an awful—a freezing distance (the two geographical poles are not wider asunder!); but this is a matter of strict necessity—a point of professional *etiquette*, and the more to be observed, as its maintenance involves no loss of free-commons; and, to finish the picture of domestic happiness, it may be sworn that he entertains a growing and pretty visible contempt for the very parent whose false and foolish

ambition thus inconsiderately supplied the fuel that lights up the flame of all this arrogant and ignorant conceit! The truth is, the brethren cordially hate each other; while they despise their parent for his unjust partiality, in the selection of their ill-arranged pursuits. Every day and hour sees them more and more estranged from each other's affection and respect. There is no point of union remaining. The harmony arising from similarity of feeling and habit has been violently and irreparably destroyed; while, as far as the public are concerned, the higher professions are brought into disrepute, or at least shorn of their previously-imagined dignity, through the mongrel vulgarity of these morally-illegitimate members. Sooth to say, it is no longer a matter of Κῦδος to be a barrister or a physician; batch after batch is made of materials not to be spoken of but with Cicero's exclamation—'Eheu conditionem hujus temporis!' Things were not so managed in those days when public holidays brought together the various classes of society, in their corporate and more openly recognised bonds of relationship. The ambition of men took then a proper channel. Each was desirous to appear amongst the most respectable and eminent of his own natural grade; not to figure among the base additions to the tail of a higher class; or, if they had designed for themselves this latter course, there were restrictions that almost generally barred the unwise attempt. The only fair passport to a higher station, *per saltum*,

as it were, is derived, as I have before remarked, from the *inborn pre-eminence* of the man of humble extraction: a pre-eminence early and indubitably manifested in the thoughts or acts of him who—to use the words of one similarly gifted—is, 'ad gloriam inflammatus à pueritiâ.'

> This morning like the spirit of a youth
> That means to be of note, rises betimes.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

"*The hand of God is in this!* Let him tread onward and fearlessly! He is better *born* than he appears; for the awful fiat of *Divinity Itself* has stamped him as a being of more than ordinary mould.

> Roughlie not made up in the common mould.
>
> DRAYTON.

Whatever may be the nature of those powers with which he is invested, a free scope for their development must sooner or later be afforded. Boasts he of superior literary accomplishment, the wide arena of letters lies open for the exercise of his talents. By the same sure spell of innate superiority, aided by competent cultivation, is distinction in the fine arts attainable. Learning will ever carry with it an 'Open, Sesame!' to the best society—namely, the society of men of learning; while its exertions will be duly acknowledged, and in a wide majority of cases, rewarded at its proper value. 'Gloriâ invitantur præclara ingenia!' *Glory*, not wealth, or worldly advantage merely, is the legitimate pursuit of *genius*,

and its *best reward!* If the possessor of a mind thus signally impressed by the Deity with those commanding attributes that achieve a natural supremacy over the intellectual qualities of the age, be denied the petty distinctions and common gratifications of the mere worldly-minded representatives of courts or chambers of commerce, he is permitted, under even the darkest reverses of fortune, to enjoy the *divine privileges—the inalienable dignity—the unbought grandeur of his own mysterious being!* God's high, inscrutable purposes are fulfilled—the behest of destiny is accomplished—he smiles on his fate! For the rest, to whom the higher pursuits of mind are forbidden—who have no *born* thirst for distinction—no emulation save the low, churlish one of amassing money, let them not seek to o'ertop the banks that properly confine the main stream within its destined channel; let them float steadily down with the tide, in obedience to that natural impulse which directs the current in its slow, uniform advance to the distant goal —*the shoreless ocean of oblivion!* But, to pursue my observations on the just distinctions of classes. The wisest legislators were those who preserved, in the most marked degree, the various divisions of the social scale. Such, for instance, were those who, in the public theatres of ancient Rome, assigned separate seats to the senators, knights, and people. Such also were those who, in our own country, forbade the right of marriage to persons of unequal degree, and

rendered void, if contracted, alliances wherein Nature herself seemed to pronounce a divorce. And most unwise were they, who counselled the stripping away of those ancient honourable ceremonies which served more strongly to mark the distinctions of grade. Such were the more elaborate formalities that once attended the investiture of the Orders of the Garter and the Bath. The same short-sighted authorities have taken away from baronets and knights-bachelors their once popular style of 'right worshipful,' and from esquires that of 'worshipful.' They allow coats-of-arms to be conferred on parties, whose sole claim to such an honour is that they can afford to pay the fees thereon, to the utter disgust and indignation of those of old chivalric descent—now, alas! a small minority! They hold in comparative contempt the high claims of literary merit; and cast wealth and honours on the petty, half-educated, mere patronage-sprung retainers of our civil establishments. They leave the invalided veterans of the noble profession of arms (especially those of subaltern rank) to beggary of the worst sort—the beggary that is obliged to keep up, without adequate means, the externals of a certain recognised position in society; and in their dealings with the clergy they pamper and surround with inconsistent means of luxury a few, at the cost of the many—too often providing better for the exciseman than for the vicar of a parish; and yet expecting, in their sapience, that the latter should relieve the poor and

hungry, when (God help him!) he can scarcely relieve *himself*, in the same crying necessity! Let us go back to the good old times before the Reformation, and take example of our betters—I mean those who seem better able to instruct us. Alas! the spirit that destroyed the fine old libraries of the colleges and monasteries (a Protestant freak that cost us the life of the venerable antiquary Leland, who lost his senses on witnessing those sacrilegious outrages), has ever since been kept alive by feeding on the sage and honoured customs and observances, which were sanctioned and promoted by the ancient oracles! We are content to walk in the light of our own wisdom; we reject the precepts and examples of old. We are a more learned, and a more clever, and a more enlightened people, than the world ever saw before. Thus, day after day, we wander forth from the 'beaten tracks' of 'reverend antiquitie;' and hour after hour brings to light something as an unexpected addition to the confusion and anomaly which mark the times we live in. For myself, a reverer of the authority of ages, I am sick of the motley scene, and often exclaim with *Macbeth*—

> 'There's nothing serious in mortality:
> All is but toys: renown and grace is dead.'

I long to join the great departed, in whatsoever distant world they may be, and to share, however humbly, as an inferior, the sweet solace of their congenial con-

verse. Oh, blessed thought of immortality! to which our hearts so fervently aspire, when the vexations and disturbances of this wearisome life fret and fester at their core. Above all things, I long to be delivered from the annoyances of three great parties—the mob-theorists in legislation; the 'licensed dealers' in religion (the men whose mere lip-words are dealt out professionally for a certain fee); and the railroad, or '*grindstone* gentry' of the day. These seem to me to fill up a wide space of canvas in the modern picture of life; and '*Ohe! jam satis!*'—enough, oh, enough! is ever on my lips when I venture to look upon it."

Here the conversation was allowed to cease, and my acquaintance and I parted; he to go to his share-broker's (as it afterwards appeared), to ascertain the value of some particular scrip; and I to my book-seller's, to pick up such old volumes as had found their way into his stock, since I had last ransacked each dusky and dusty corner. I need not say that I had made no convert to my opinions.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAST.

CHA. And so, God keep your worship!
As You Like It, Act i. sc. 1.

AND now, gentle, courteous, and loved reader, the time is come when, with the warm feelings of a brief, but cordial friendship, I must say unto you, farewell. It is a word that must be spoken, yet cannot, on *my* part at least, be uttered without regret. Our pleasant conversation is well nigh over—our train of sympathetic impressions about to close. In a few short moments we part; and, having parted, it may be our fate never to meet again, in this strangely hurrying and changeful scene—

—"which idiots hug,
Nay, wise men flatter with the name of Life."

For myself I may here declare, in the same spirit that actuated my worthy and honoured family-connection, Mrs. B— of D—, alluded to in a prior page, that my pen shall ever be found amongst the foremost to wage war against the levelling principles of these latter times. Yea, though worn down to the very

stump, it shall still shed its last drop of ink to blot forth a ready indignation against all who would basely and craftily destroy the ancient landmarks. It shall yet keep the field, like the gallant Widdrington of old, who, as we are told in the good old ballad of 'Chevy Chase,'—

> "When his legs were smitten off
> Still fought upon his *stumps* !"

It shall never be any fault of mine, that—as the fine, spirited song of other years has it,—

> "The *flowers* of the forest are *weeded* away !"

Sir Ernest Oldworthy would doubtless have cast an approving eye on this feeble performance of mine, could he have witnessed the changes to which it refers. But that worthy old knight had the good fortune to live in times, when the distinction of ranks was still preserved with tolerable exactness,—when citizens and burgesses were content to fill that moderate station in the eye of society, which their position in the scale of graduated respectability rendered suitable. In those days, be it remarked, gentlemen had not altogether laid aside their velvet coats and embroidered vests, their wigs, swords, and high-heeled shoes. The diamond snuff-box still sparkled in the finely-ruffled hand; and the laced cravat bespoke by its quality the condition of the wearer. Then, too, were valets dressed as valets; and not adorned, as in the present day, with even greater elegance than their

masters. We may preach as much as we please about philosophy and the principles of real refinement, and proceed in our assumed doctrine, that an attention to mere externals is incongruous with the increased intelligence of the age; but sure I am, that the laying aside a marked style of costume, as indicative of the rank of the noble or gentle owner, was the first step towards weakening his claim to superior consideration in the certain necessary intercourse between parties of unequal station.

Ask, for instance, any officer of the navy or army, whether he does not consider that the disparity of dress has a full share of influence, in preserving the nicely-adjusted subordination of his inferiors in arms. But we cannot reasonably doubt, that the senses are affected similarly, at the present day, as they were one hundred and fifty years ago; and that could a dress of estate be now limited to the privileged classes, so as to mark the genus, man of ancestry; it would go far towards reviving the almost extinct prejudices in favour of birth and hereditary honours. Another and still heavier blow to the ascendency of an upper grade, in this country, was the legalizing all kinds of religious worship. The very name of Calvin spits forth volumes of hatred to aristocratic pre-eminence. I trace almost every act of open insubordination, on the part of inferiors, to the preaching of the neighbouring conventicle. The noble old precept written in our churches,—" Fear God and Honour the King!"

finds no place in a Calvinist meeting-house; though I believe (let me do them justice,) that the people are taught to respect magistrates, yet they are not told, thanks to the ignorance of their teachers, that every peer of the realm is, *jure dignitatis*, in the commission of the peace; and they look upon lords and dukes, therefore, as on other people, whom they consider no better than themselves! They are, in too many instances, what St. Paul himself would style them:—"filthy dreamers, speaking evil of dignities!"

Since, therefore, day by day, we see some cherished trace of the past leaving us, and some regretted innovation taking root in its place;—since we view the decay of too many of our grand old feudal families proceeding in a corresponding ratio with the rise of others that have nothing but their meanly-acquired wealth to recommend them; let us, gentle reader! (for I trust that each of my readers is gentle, and, like myself, an enthusiastic lover of the past!) cling but the more closely to the memory of the good old times that have fled! Let their traditions become still more precious—their relics be preserved with yet more affectionate care; and let us endeavour, in our own persons and characters, to uphold and reflect honour upon the principles and actions of our high-spirited and generous forefathers; to the utter discountenance and contempt of all the pert and puny pretenders who affect to sneer at the dignity of ancient worth; and to the equal confusion of all the

pitifully-carking patrons, preachers, and supporters of the "gripple" school of Modern Utilitarianism!

> The *gripple* merchant, born to be the curse
> Of this brave isle!
>
> DRAYTON.

I hate formal leave-takings. There is my hand—may we meet again! And now I would say to you, briefly and heartily, in the good old farewell-phrase of better times,—"God save you, my heart!" Many years of sunshiny days be yours! Go wherever you will, may very jovial, facetious society, good fare, and good cheer, await you! I bid you a loath farewell.—"Vale, salve et vale!"

ROBERT BIGSBY.

REPTON, DERBYSHIRE, *December*, 1845.

NOTES TO APPENDIX.

(1.) This family was seated at Basing, in the county of Southampton, and enjoyed the rank of great barons in the time of the Conqueror. The elder line is now represented by the Duke of Bolton, and the branch here spoken of by the Author's family.—BURKE'S *Heraldic and Genealogical Dictionary of the Landed Gentry, sub voce* Bigsby. Supplemental volume, p. 20. Also the same Author's *Illuminated Heraldic Illustrations, with Explanatory Pedigrees and Annotations,* Plate 8.

(2.) Mr. Wordsworth has recently printed, with additional notes, for private circulation, an eloquent remonstrance, which he had previously addressed to the editor of the "Morning Post," on the subject of the threatened railways in the vicinity of Windermere, for a copy of which the author has the pleasure to be indebted to the kind consideration of that illustrious poet, who confers on the office of laureate a dignity accordant with its just distinction. May he long, very long, wear the wreath which he has so nobly won. It will never be given to a worthier.

(3.) The Roman amphitheatre at Dorchester has been saved from destruction by the British Archæological Association. It was intended that the Weymouth railway should pass through it.

(4.) A feeling of hereditary attachment to the house of Chesterfield is thus indulged in by the author, whose uncle, the Rev.

Thomas Bigsby, A. M.,* some time fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, married, in March, 1782, Frances, widow of Arthur

* The above Thomas Bigsby was author of a poem, entitled "Marathon and Yaratilda," printed at Bath, by W. Meyler, in 1796. It was dedicated to her Royal Highness the Duchess of York, who then presided over the festivities of that once famous resort of the *beau monde*, the "Queen City of the West," as Bath was elegantly designated. Her Royal Highness was, at this period, in her twenty-ninth year, in the possession of personal, as well as intellectual, charms and accomplishments of the highest order, and, from her exalted rank and peculiar affability, regarded as the presiding divinity of the circles of rank, fashion, and literary pre-eminence. The beautiful and gifted niece of no less a monarch than Frederick the Great, the lovely consort of one of our own most beloved princes, she shed a fascination over the regions of patronage, which can only be fully appreciated by those on whom the smiles of royal beauty have descended—by those who mingled in the gay diversions of that truly patrician circle of which her Royal Highness was the soul and centre. The "most marked attention" with which the author of "Marathon and Yaratilda" was flattered by his august patroness, during the whole period of his residence in the "Queen City," is gratefully alluded to in a correspondence remaining in the writer's possession; and which may be said to describe, in the words of Erskine, the matchless attractions of the scenes under notice.

"But *scenes* like these how rare to find,
As rare as YORK's delightful mind!"

The writer gratifies a pardonable kind of vanity—if, indeed, a higher feeling be absent—in recalling from oblivion the just marks of esteem entertained for a deceased relative and BENEFACTOR, by one who was truly great in character, as well as station.

In the Notes to Part II., Vol. I. of the present work, will be found an interesting account of the astrolabe of Sir Francis Drake, presented to the Rev. Thomas Bigsby, by the late Earl of Chesterfield, the father of the present peer, in 1783, and subsequently given, by the author of the present publication, to his late Majesty King William IV. (the "sailor king"), by whose royal command it was deposited at Greenwich Hospital, where it continues to be exhibited to the public, in the Painted Hall, a proud testimony to the maritime and naval glories of our ancestors. This note is compiled of somewhat unconnected particulars, which, though apparently vague and irrelevant, possess a close relation to the author's own feelings and trains of pleasurable reminiscence, while they, in some respect, preserve an evidence of his grateful attachment to the distinguished house of Chesterfield, from which the author's family has received so many estimable attentions and favours. The good-natured reader will indulgently pass over, or find excuse for, the relation of these desultory, and perhaps trivial, incidents, more particularly if he be friendly to the revived recollection of

Charles Stanhope, Esq.,* father to the late Earl of Chesterfield, K.G. (Master of the Horse to his Majesty King George III.), and grandfather to the present earl, to whom this work has the honour to be dedicated.

(5.) The crest of Stanhope is: "On a wreath, a tower, *argent*, with a demi-lion rampant, issuing from the battlements, *or*, ducally crowned, *gules*, and holding between his paws a grenade firing, *proper*.

(6.) For an impartial comparison between the piety and good works of our ancestors in what have been falsely called "The *Dark* Ages," and the religious impressions and acts of their more modern descendants, the author would respectfully refer the reader, who may wish to pursue the investigation, to his review of the Very Reverend the Dean of Hereford's work, entitled "A Statement of the Condition and Circumstances of the Cathedral Church of Hereford," in the "Monthly Review," for June, 1843, art. iii. p. 162.

(7.) I had scarcely penned this paper, ere I met with a striking illustration of the argument to which it refers. The *Athenæum* of March 28th, of the present year, contains the following advertisement:—"The Aristocracy of England; a History for the People. By John Hampden, Jun.' 'Cromwell.—What, then, is

facts that bear a characteristic impress, however minute, of the features of a past era. To the more critical, who may cavil at allusions to family incidents of this nature, the author would apologise in the words of Sir Walter Scott, on a similar occasion. "And thus, as in the play of the 'Anti-Jacobin,' the ghost of the author's grandmother having arisen to speak the epilogue, it is full time to conclude, lest the reader should remonstrate that his desire to know the Author of 'Waverley,' never included a wish to be acquainted with his whole ancestry."

* To the above Arthur Charles Stanhope, Esq., who was the heir-at-law (though not the survivor) of Philip Dormer Stanhope, K.G., commonly called "The Great Earl," were addressed eleven of that distinguished nobleman's "Letters," which were published in a separate form, soon after the general edition of his lordship's works, and are now become exceedingly scarce, a deficiency which the author of the present work proposes to remedy by a new edition, enriched with additional notes of an original and interesting character.

the great root of all our grievances? Pym.—The Aristocracy. Give us their true history, and you unriddle the secret of every national embarrassment.'" On subsequently turning to the same paper for Feb. 14, I stumbled upon the editorial paragraph which follows:—"By the way, to us, *who are fond of marking the moral signs of the time*, and *know how important and expressive are the elemental changes which are indicated by the direction of a straw*, it does not seem out of place or idle to mention that the ordinary holiday kept by the House of Commons on the 30th of January *was not asked for, this year*, IN THE NAME OF THE ROYAL MARTYR *who has so long ruled it from his grave.* The determination of CERTAIN MEMBERS to lift up their testimony against THIS ANTIQUATED PIECE OF POLITICAL ASSERTION [? ! ?] was shrewdly defeated *by a disclaimer of any appeal to the authority impugned;* and, after his apotheosis of centuries, the Martyr *of the Calendar* may be said to have been what is technically called 'dropped,' in the House of Commons." The "determination of CERTAIN MEMBERS," in regard to the particular in question, painfully reminds me of a truth which I endeavour to hide as much as possible from my own observation, viz., that many of our finest old hereditary estates are falling into the hands of the men of the loom, who, in too many instances, are dissatisfied with the share of deference which they receive in their new position, and are anxious, by all the means in their power, to clothe themselves with an added social importance. These become members of the senate, these fill our county offices of trust, these are magistrates, deputy-lieutenants, and directors of public institutions. And these are the men who will never rest till they have done away with every "antiquated piece of political assertion," that stands in the way of their own inordinate and basely-conceived ambition. I will make no further comment, but append to the preceding extracts a word or two from Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion:—"For though *the gentlemen of ancient families and estates* were, for the most part, well affected to the king, and easily discerned by what faction the Parliament was governed, yet there were *a people of an inferior degree*, who, by good husbandry, clothing, and other thriving arts, had gotten very great fortunes, and, by

degrees, getting themselves into the gentlemen's estates, were angry that they found not themselves in the same esteem and reputation with those whose estates they had, and, therefore, with more industry than the other, studied all ways to make themselves considerable."

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NOTICES OF DR. BIGSBY'S FORMER WORKS.

"Redolent of warm feeling and love of nature in all her unadulterated simplicity and charmful beauty. There is, in truth, so exquisite a commingling and association between the myriad aspects of natural light and loveliness and the emanations of the soul and spirit, that their assimilation at once bespeaks an union pre-ordained and divine. Bodily blindness has its parallel in mental obscurity of vision, while the poet's great distinction is the glory of this double sight. This stamp is on our author's pages."—From "*The Metropolitan Magazine*" *for November*, 1842.

"It is not possible to convey to the reader by any general statement, or any samples for which we can find space, an adequate notion of these Poems and Essays; for, unlike almost every collection that has fallen under our notice, we are bound to declare that there is not one piece in this stately volume that is not beautiful, graceful, and rich, and therefore deserving of being pondered and preserved. * * * The language and modes of expression have the coy winningness, the apt ease, the swelling wealth, that meet and most welcomely surpass expectation,—for our poet is master of great variety. * * * The mint is full of invaluable treasure which has issued such sterling and excellent coin."—From "*The Monthly Review*" *for December*, 1842.

"The prose portion of the volume is exceedingly readable; always displaying refinement and scholarship, now and then a genuine sparkle of wit, or a burst of humour, and frequently a rather uncommon degree of antiquarian information. The variety offered in the volume is great; and it is, therefore, probable it will find favour with many readers. We shall close our few remarks on it with a somewhat long extract from a very interesting essay. * * * Only the length of the essay prevents us quoting it entire."—From "*The Court Gazette*" *for October* 29, 1842.

"A more modern poem has recently been published, entitled 'The Triumph of Drake, or the Dawn of England's Naval Power.' The author is ROBERT BIGSBY, LL.D., who presented the astrolabe of Drake to his late Majesty William IV.; and the king, desirous of preserving so valuable a relic, directed that it should be placed in the Painted Hall at Greenwich, where it now is, under a glass case. It is an extremely curious time and sight-piece, made of gold, and worn suspended from round the neck. The poem of Dr. BIGSBY has considerable merit, and may be read with pleasure."—From "*Colburn's United Service Magazine*" *for June*, 1842.*

"This work we have perused with much pleasure, and with sentiments of high respect for the author. A glowing and abiding love of nature under every aspect—a deep 'reverence for the dreams of his youth'—a profound and minute affection for the scenes and associations of early life, the sports, the companions, the studies of boyhood, a still youthful love of legendary lore, and, as might be inferred from the antiquarian honours of the author, a very reveller among ruins, a solemn admiration of hoary forests and age-hallowed fanes, are all conspicuous characteristics of the very numerous and varied compositions contained in the volume now claiming our attention."—From "*The Liverpool Chronicle*" *for July* 30, 1842.

* See Article entitled, "Our Naval Chiefs of Other Days. By a Tar of the Old School."

"Characterized by a tone of feeling and a maturity of taste which cannot fail to be appreciated by the genuine lovers of poetry."—From "*The United Service Gazette*" *for October* 22, 1842.

"But the prose piece from which we shall take our samples for this occasion, is headed 'THE ANTIQUARY,' and is really a 'characteristic sketch.' In this paper there is such a display of affectionate brotherhood, such a fecundity of quaint and half-sportive portraiture, such a variety of expression, imagery, and illustration, as renders it most apparent that Dr. Bigsby himself, is deeply imbued with the spirit he characterises, and largely acquainted with the treasures and archives of antiquarian research."—From "*The Monthly Review*," *for April*, 1843.

"We cordially commend the volume to public notice. It is the production of a richly-cultivated mind, and abounds with specimens of true poetry."—From "*The Nottingham Mercury*," *for July* 15, 1842.

"This elegant volume, composed as it is of prose and verse, partakes somewhat of the nature of the larger annuals, and is got up in a similar style. The literary contents, too, are of a superior character to most of the poetry that passes through our hands. * * * There is a terseness, as well as a beauty, about his metrical compositions, which cannot fail to make an impression on the reader."—From "*The Birmingham Advertiser*," *for October* 27, 1842.

"We have neither space nor opportunity to notice, this week, the above volume, in a manner commensurate with its merits. It is the production of a talented and highly-educated townsman, whose temporary sojourn at Repton, amidst the scenes of his early school-boy recollections, has lighted up his fancy, and kindled that fire of poetic enthusiasm, which Byron says glowed within *his* bosom, when he gazed on the spire of 'the seat of his youth.' We purpose, on some future occasion, to take a critical review of Dr. BIGSBY's principal poems and essays ; and must now content ourselves with extracting one of the shorter compositions, which a return to the place of his nativity elicited from the genius of our gifted friend."—From "*The Nottingham Journal*," *for July* 22, 1842.

"We must here close our extracts, willingly rendering our laudation to the patriotic spirit, and poetic enthusiasm of Dr. BIGSBY ; and we have hope that genius such as his, will excite the present generation to that appreciation of maritime discovery, which is now so desirable. Indeed, there is an apathy in the public mind on all high and elevating subjects, which demands breaking up, else England will cease to be England."—From "*The Sunbeam*," *for November* 23, 1839.

"The language is often rich, and even picturesque. The versification is good, and the music faultless."—From "*The London Weekly Review*," *for November* 27, 1839.

"In '*The Literary Gazette*,' *of the* 10*th of June*, 1837, we gave an account of the astrolabe of the gallant Sir Francis Drake, deposited in Greenwich Hospital, by the writer of this poem, into whose family the interesting relic had passed by intermarriage with the noble house of Stanhope (Chesterfield). To this account, which was widely copied into the public journals of the time, we beg to refer our readers for the subject of this poetical effusion. In it the descriptions of Drake and his voyages, and of his mistress Queen Elizabeth, with the pageantry and splendours of her court, are vividly painted. We quote a passage in proof of this, and as a fair example of the whole. It paints Drake's triumphant return and reception by his sovereign."—From "*The Literary Gazette*," *for October* 5, 1839.

